


CHELSEA SQUARE, NEW YORK 11, N. Y.



The Rev. E. W. Virgin



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2025

The Real John Wesley

The Real John Wesley

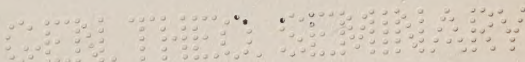
By

WILLIAM HENRY MEREDITH

Author of "Pilgrimages to Methodist Shrines"

A Bicentennial Contribution

*"His life was gentle, and the elements
So mixed in him, that nature might stand up,
And say to all the world: 'This was a man!'"*



CINCINNATI: JENNINGS AND PYE
NEW YORK: EATON AND MAINS

92
W515m

37708

COPYRIGHT, 1903, BY
JENNINGS AND PYE

WABERD ART JOO
YABELL
XROY WEM

a

Dedicated

To Susan, my beloved Wife, who, like Susannah, the Mother of the Wesleys, has been a helpmeet to her husband in his ministry, and who has been especially successful in leading our seven children into the good and the right way. On seeing this they will each rise up and call her: "Blessed Mother!"

W. H. M.

TO THE READER

THIS book is not intended to be a detailed biography of John Wesley. Very many such already exist. At least thirty look down from our shelves upon us as we write. They range in size from the pamphlet to the three voluminous volumes of Tyerman. All are well worth reading, to those who have the time and patience to read them. Our aim herein is to present pen-pictures of John Wesley as he really was, and as he appeals to us in this new century.

The busy man or woman, cleric or lay, need not necessarily read the chapters seriatim at first. Let such select from the table of contents, go in anywhere, and if he come out determined to read the whole book, he will find all the chapters closely connected, and together giving a unique portraiture of the real John Wesley.

The only complete Life of John Wesley is found in his marvelous Journals, *unabridged*. All our references to the Journals are given by dates, and therefore can be found in any *unmutilated* edition of the Journals, which not only picture the real John Wesley, but also the real England of the eighteenth century, as does no other work.

To the *Methodist Review*, the *Homiletic Review*, *Zion's Herald*, the *Christian Advocate*, the *Western Christian Advocate*, and the *North-western Christian Advocate*, the author is grateful for permission to reprint certain portions which originally appeared in their columns.

It is a joy to us to be able to make this small contribution to the bicentennial studies and celebrations of the birth of that great gift of God to his Church universal, John Wesley, who was born June 28, 1703.

WILLIAM HENRY MEREDITH.

Boston, Mass.

CONTENTS



CHAPTER	PAGE
I. JOHN WESLEY AT HOME, - - - -	13
II. JOHN WESLEY AT SCHOOL AND AT COLLEGE,	30
III. JOHN WESLEY, MISSIONARY, - - -	43
IV. JOHN WESLEY — HIS CONVERSION. WHEN AND WHERE? - - - - -	57
V. JOHN WESLEY, EDUCATOR, - - -	71
VI. JOHN WESLEY, ANTICIPATOR, - - -	93
VII. JOHN WESLEY, CHRISTIAN SOCIALIST, -	105
VIII. JOHN WESLEY—A GREAT GIVER, - - -	134
IX. JOHN WESLEY, TOLERATOR, - - -	148
X. JOHN WESLEY AS A PREACHER FOR THE PRESENT TIME, - - - - -	161
XI. JOHN WESLEY—HIS PREACHING, AND HINTS TO PREACHERS, - - - - -	179
XII. JOHN WESLEY AND POLITICS, - - -	197
XIII. JOHN WESLEY, TEMPERANCE REFORMER, -	221

CHAPTER	PAGE
XIV. JOHN WESLEY RECREATING, - - -	230
XV. JOHN WESLEY—HIS COURAGE, - -	249
XVI. JOHN WESLEY—HIS WIT AND HUMOR, -	272
XVII. JOHN WESLEY AND EMOTIONALISM, -	288
XVIII. JOHN WESLEY AS A FRIEND AND AS A LOVER,	301
XIX. JOHN WESLEY AND HIS WIFE, - -	328
XX. JOHN WESLEY, AUTHOR, - - - -	346
XXI. JOHN WESLEY—EARLIEST AND LATER BIOGRAPHIES, - - - - -	366
XXII. JOHN WESLEY AND HIS AMBITION, -	377
XXIII. JOHN WESLEY — LEADER AND ONE-MAN POWER, - - - - -	385
XXIV. JOHN WESLEY—HIS TRANSLATION. BY AN EYEWITNESS, - - - - -	399
XXV. THE MOTHER CHURCH OF METHODISM, -	420

The Real John Wesley

CHAPTER I.

John Wesley At Home.

"The natal soil to all how strangely sweet!

The place where first he breathed, who can forget?"

THUS wrote John Wesley of his native Epworth, in his Journals for July 9, 10, 1779. He adds: "Taking a solitary walk in the churchyard, I felt the truth of 'one generation goeth and another cometh.' See how the earth drops its inhabitants as the tree drops its leaves!"

Where is Epworth? "Six miles from nowhere," is one of the answers given. Facilities for reaching it have improved since the railroad station was opened at Haxey, about five miles from Epworth. From the train the village can be reached by "bus" or by a health-promoting walk amid rural scenery.

The Epworth League has brought the village into prominence. But "it is not acres, but men, that make a town or a nation." William

The Real John Wesley.

Shakespeare made little Stratford-on-Avon so great that at least twenty thousand people visit it every year. Robert Burns made the common neighborhood of Ayr an uncommonly interesting spot. What Luther did for Eisleben, and Jesus did for the "little town of Bethlehem," John Wesley has done for little Epworth.

As we now approach the village with its red-tiled roofs, the most prominent object is the old parish church on the northeast. With the village it is raised up from the surrounding low country. Its original name, "Heapeurde," means "the farm on the rising ground."

The population of Epworth remains at about two thousand. It is an excellent place for the tourist to spend a quiet and restful Sunday, and to see typical English village life on the Lord's-day. Most Methodists would worship in the morning in the old parish church of St. Andrew, of which the father of the Wesleys was rector for nearly forty years; and would attend Sunday-school and Methodist meeting in the afternoon and evening, in the new and beautiful Wesley Memorial Wesleyan Methodist Church.

John Wesley at Home.

The most attractive spot in the village is the rectory, once the home of John Wesley. The grounds, which cover three acres, comprise a northeast corner lot. The building stands near the southeast corner of the plot. It now fronts west upon a beautiful lawn. The main entrance is now where the original front entrance was, on the south side. It is walled all around and has a very modern appearance.

Only cultivated English gentlemen have occupied this rectory in modern times. Well-behaved tourists are always welcome callers, and are kindly shown over the old house. Stepping into the entrance-hall, which has a door opening out into the lawn, before the west front, we pass into the historic kitchen, thence to the old drawing-room, before proceeding up the old and solid oak staircase, up which the little Wesley feet so often pattered. On arriving at the first landing we see on this floor the study, which is the back room, where Samuel Wesley toiled so long, and the bedrooms for the family. Here we also see the back stairs on which Hetty used to sit to prevent the mysterious noises from hindering her father, whilst he studied sermons, rhymes, and politics. The

The Real John Wesley.

stairs leading up to the attic, which was "Old Jeffrey's" quarters, are ancient, and especially so the dormer window. The floor of these apartments is of gypsum, a kind of fireproof concrete, which gives back a metallic sound. The whole house is built to remain.

But the village and rectory, as they were when the home of Wesley, interests us now much more than what they now are.

If Epworth is hard to reach in 1903, how much harder was it to reach in 1703, when John Wesley there first saw the light! It was then not five miles, but more than a hundred years from a railway. It was not then reached by "bus," but often by boat, for it was on the "Isle of Axholme," the "Metropolis of the Isle." The rivers Idle, Torn, and Don flow around its southern and western sides; the Trent bounds it on the east; and the Bykers dyke, running from the Idle to the Trent, completes the circuit of the river-islet. It was always an unpleasant, and sometimes a dangerous, trip to Epworth, in the Isle of Axholme, in Wesley's childhood days. When John Wesley arrived, June 28, 1703, he opened his eyes not upon the present rectory, which was not

John Wesley at Home.

built until he was in his seventh year. The old rectory, which was consumed by fire February 9, 1709, was the one into which he was born. It differed greatly from the present structure, as this description, from a document dated 1607, shows. It says of the older house:

“It consists of five baies, built of timber and plaister, and covered with straw hatchet, the whole building being contrived into three stories, and disposed in seven chief rooms—a kitchinge, a hall, a parlour, a butterie, and three large upper rooms, and some others of common use; and also a little garden, empailed betweene the stone wall and the south.” There was also “one barn of six baies, built all of timber and clay walls, and covered with straw thatche, with out shotts about it and free house therebye; likewise one dove cote of timber and plaister, covered with straw thatche, and one hemp-kiln that hath been usealie occupied for the parsonage ground, and joining upon the south.”

This was John Wesley’s home from June 28, 1703, to February 9, 1709, when he was almost miraculously saved from the flames which wholly consumed it. For about a year the

The Real John Wesley.

children were distributed in the neighborhood, after which they lived in the present rectory, the latest alterations in which were made by Canon Overton in 1883. To his honor be it said, he tried to restore as far as possible the old lines of the building. This was John Wesley's home until he was about ten and a half years old, when he left it for Charterhouse School, London, and Christ Church, and Lincoln Colleges, Oxford. From that time, excepting during his curacy at Wroote, near by, he was only an occasional visitor to his Epworth home. But the influences of that home, from which he went out at such an early age, remained with him for good until he entered the home above, March 2, 1791, aged eighty-eight years.

The Wesley home was marked by continuous poverty of the most trying kind,—respectable poverty. It was also marked by intense piety of the best kind,—practical piety. The heads of that family, on both sides of the house, belonged to the aristocracy of brains as well as that of social status. Concerning the erudition and diligence of the poet, preacher, and author, Samuel Wesley, and his pecuniary and other struggles, is it not written

John Wesley at Home.

in many books? Concerning Susannah, the mother of the Wesleys, it may easily be prophesied that her praises will not cease to be sounded whilst noble womanhood, and especially motherhood, blesses the earth. John Benjamin was the fifteenth of her nineteen children, and the second of her sons who survived. None of these children were born in the present rectory. The most eventful experience of John Wesley at home, after his escape from the fire, at six years of age, was his recovery from smallpox when nine years of age. Four of the children in the new rectory had this dreadful disease, so common in those days of neglect of proper sanitation. The father was in London at the time. Mrs. Wesley wrote him about it, and told him that Jack was very brave in bearing his pains, "though he was mad at the smallpox when they were sore, as we thought from his looking sourly at them, though he said nothing." Concerning the home life of the Wesley children it would be easy to conjecture. Imagination could picture many an interesting scene, much of which had never been so. Instead of this we have from her own pen, at her son John's request, a description

The Real John Wesley.

of that life. It is given in full in Dr. Adam Clarke's "Wesley Family:"

"EPWORTH, July 24, 1732.

"DEAR SON,—According to your desire, I have collected the principal rules I have observed in educating my children. . . . When turned a year old (and some before), they were taught to fear the rod and cry softly, by which means they escaped abundance of correction which they might otherwise have had; and that most odious noise of the crying of children was rarely heard in the house, but the family used to live in as much quietness as if there had not been a child among them. . . . Drinking or eating between meals was never allowed, unless in cases of sickness, which seldom happened. . . . At six, as soon as family prayer was over, they had their supper; at seven, the maid washed them, and, beginning at the youngest, she undressed and got them all to bed by eight, at which time she left them in their several rooms awake; for there was no such thing allowed of in our house as sitting by a child till it fell asleep. . . .

John Wesley at Home.

“In order to form the mind of children the first thing to be done is to conquer their will and bring them to an obedient temper. To inform the understanding is the work of time, and must, with children, proceed slowly, as they are able to bear it; but the subjecting of the will is a thing that must be done at once, and the sooner the better; for by neglecting timely correction they will contract a stubbornness and obstinacy which are hardly ever conquered, and never without using such severity as would be painful to me as to the child. In the esteem of the world they pass for kind and indulgent whom I call cruel parents, who permit their children to get habits which they know must be afterwards broken. Nay, some are so stupidly fond [foolish] as in sport to teach their children to do things which a while after they have severely beaten them for doing. When a child is corrected it must be conquered, and this will be no hard matter to do if it be not grown headstrong by too much indulgence. And when the will of a child is totally subdued, and it is brought to revere and stand in awe of the parents, then a great many childish follies and inadvertencies may be passed by.

The Real John Wesley.

Some should be overlooked and others mildly reproved; but no willful transgression ought ever to be forgiven children without chastisement less or more, as the nature and circumstances of the case may require. I insist on conquering the will of children betimes, because this is the only strong and rational foundation of a religious education, without which both precept and example will be ineffectual. But when this is thoroughly done, then a child is capable of being governed by the reason and piety of its parents till its own understanding come to maturity, and the principles of religion have taken deep root in the mind."

Mrs. Wesley goes on speak with great emphasis of self-will. She considered it all-important that it should be subdued, and she says that whoever does that works for God toward salvation, and whoever neglects it "does all that in him lies to damn his child, body and soul, forever."

"Our children were taught as soon as they could speak the Lord's Prayer, which they were made to say at rising and at bedtime constantly, to which, as they grew bigger, were added a short prayer for their parents, and

John Wesley at Home.

some collects, a short catechism and some portion of Scripture, as their memories could bear. They were very early made to distinguish the Sabbath from other days, before they could well speak or go. They were soon taught to be still at family prayers, and to ask a blessing immediately after, which they used to do by signs, before they could kneel or speak.

“They were quickly made to understand that they might have nothing they cried for, and instructed to speak handsomely for what they wanted. They were not suffered to ask even the lowest servant for anything without saying, ‘Pray give me such a thing;’ and the servant was chid if she ever let him omit that word.

“Taking God’s name in vain, cursing, and swearing, profanity, obscenity, rude, ill-bred names, were never heard among them; nor were they ever permitted to call themselves by their proper names without the addition of brother or sister. . . .

“For some years we went on very well. Never were children in better order. Never were children better disposed to piety, or in more subjection to their parents, till that fatal

The Real John Wesley.

disposition of them after the fire into several families. [She then describes the vicious effects on their manners this dispersior had.] When the house was rebuilt, and the children all brought home, we entered on a strict re-form; and then was begun the system of singing Psalms at beginning and leaving school, morning and evening. Then also that of general retirement [for study] at five o'clock was entered upon, when the eldest took the youngest that could speak, and the second the next, to whom they read the Psalms for the day or chapter in the New Testament, as in the morning they were directed to read the Psalms and a chapter in the Old Testament, after which they went to their private prayers, before they got their breakfast or came into the family.

“There were several by-laws observed among us. I mention them here because I think them useful: 1. Since cowardice and fear of punishment often led to lying, a law was made that whoever was charged with a fault of which they were guilty, if they would ingenuously confess it and promise to amend, should not be beaten. . . . 2. No sinful action, as pilfering, quarreling, etc., should ever pass

John Wesley at Home.

unpunished. 3. No child should ever be chid or beat twice for the same fault, and if they amended, that fault should never be mentioned again. 4. That every act of obedience should be always commended and frequently rewarded. 5. That every act of obedience, even if the act was not well performed, should be accepted kindly, according to the intention. 6. That the rights of property be invariably preserved. This rule can never be too much inculcated in the minds of children; and from the want of parents and governors doing it as they ought proceeds that shameful neglect of justice which we may observe in the world. 7. That promises be strictly observed, and no gift once bestowed be resumed. 8. That no girl be taught to work till she can read very well. The putting of children to learn sewing before they can read perfectly is the very reason why so few women can read fit to be heard, and never to be well understood."

These famous rules, quoted in full in Miss Clarke's Biography, with their union of severity and gentleness, and the whole influence of that home in which the saintly, kind, great-hearted, and gently imperious woman reigned

The Real John Wesley.

in the full dignity of her divine motherhood, made John and Charles Wesley. Notice these points: 1. The very early time in the child's life in which this training began; 2. The persistence with which it was kept up; 3. The emphasis on obedience. Mrs. Wesley's remarks on will-breaking do not imply the destruction of a child's will by brutal force, which is a crime against a soul,* for the Wesley family afterwards showed that they had no lack of will-power. The idea is simply obedience and instant deference to the wiser and higher will of the parents. 4. The religiousness of it all. Without wishing necessarily to indorse every particular of the conduct of that family life at Epworth, the like of which the world will never see again, we certainly think that the infusing into American home-training of something of Susannah Wesley's spirit would be the salvation of the land.

Such was the home life of John Wesley, as pictured by his mother, who was the mistress of the Epworth manse. Every Methodist

* Compare the excellent chapter by Dr. H. Clay Trumbull, "Will-training, Rather than Will-breaking," in his "Hints on Child-training." Philadelphia, 1890, pp. 37 ff.

John Wesley at Home.

should read "The Mother of the Wesleys," by the late Rev. John Kirk. From the first edition of her husband's "Life of Christ," 1693, we copy his pen-portrait of her, changing the spelling, etc.

She graced my humble roof and blest my life,
Blest me by far a greater name than wife,*
Yet still I bore an undisputed sway,
Nor was't her task, but pleasure to obey;
Scarce thought, much less could act, what I denied;
In our low house there was no room for pride;
Nor need I e'er direct what still was right;
She studied my convenience and delight.
Nor did I for her care ungrateful prove,
But only used my power to show my love;
Whate'er she ask'd I gave, without reproach or
grudge,
For still she reason asked, and I was judge;
All my commands, requests at her fair hands,
And her requests to me were all demands.
To other's threshold rarely she'd incline,
Her house her pleasure was, and she was mine;
Rarely abroad, or never, but with me,
Or when by pity call'd or charity."

Dr. Adam Clarke's tribute to her is worthy a place beside that of her husband. It is taken from Clarke's Works, Vol. II, p. 132, where he says:

* Friend.

The Real John Wesley.

“She had a strong and vigorous mind and an undaunted courage. She feared no difficulty; and, in search of truth, at once looked the most formidable objections full in the face, never hesitating to give an enemy all the vantage-ground he could gain, when she rose up to defend either the doctrines or precepts of the religion of the Bible. She was not only graceful, but beautiful in person. . . .

“As a wife, she was affectionate and obedient, having a sacred respect for authority wherever lodged. As the mistress of a large family, her management was admirable in all its parts, and its success was beyond comparison or former example.

As a Christian, she was modest, humble, and pious. Her religion was as rational as it was profound. In forming her creed she dug deep, and laid her foundation upon a rock; and the storms and adversities of life never shook it. Her faith carried her through life, and it was unimpaired in death.

“She was a tender mother, a wise and invaluable friend. Several of her children were eminent; and HE (John), who excelled all the rest, owed, under God, at least one-half of his

John Wesley at Home.

excellencies to the instruction of his mother. If it were not unusual to apply such an epithet to a woman, I would not hesitate to say she was an able divine.

“I have traced her life with much pleasure, and received from it much instruction; and when I have seen her repeatedly grappling with gigantic adversities, I have adored the grace of God that was in her, and have not been able to repress my tears. I have been acquainted with many pious females; I have read the lives of several others, and composed memoirs of a few; but such a woman, take her for all in all, I have not heard of, I have not read of, nor with her equal have I been acquainted. Such a one Solomon has described in the last chapter of his Proverbs, and to her I can apply the summed-up character of his accomplished housewife: ‘Many wives have done virtuously,’ but *Susannah Wesley* has excelled them all.”

CHAPTER II.

John Wesley at School and at College.

JOHN WESLEY'S first school was held at the Epworth Rectory. His first schoolteacher was his wise mother. Excepting those who proceeded to college, this seems to have been the only school of the Wesley children, with only one exception. The eldest boy, Samuel, attended John Holland's school in Epworth for about one year. This was after he had been in her school, where he learned the alphabet in a few hours, and could soon read the first chapter of Genesis.

The first school day of the Wesley children began when they had completed the fifth year of their age. On the day of the celebration of the fifth anniversary all things were set in order for the admission of the child on the first day of his sixth year. John's first school day

At School and at College.

was, therefore, June 29, 1708. On that day he learned the alphabet, of which he made such good use for eighty-three years. He had not been in this school eight months when the rectory was wholly consumed by fire and the school broken up for nearly a year.

This was a serious interruption. The fire occurred February 9, 1709. Then the children were distributed among the neighbors, where they learned many things which were contrary to the teachings of their mother. However, within a year the new home with its school-room was occupied. It is the present rectory. On our visits to it we have wondered which was the schoolroom. The school hours were from nine till twelve and from two till five o'clock—six hours a day of steady study, with no intermissions and no holidays. The school in the new rectory “opened and closed with singing a solemn psalm, and was a scene of perfect order, nothing being permitted to interrupt the regular course of study.” Mrs. Wesley wrote: “If visitors, business, or accident be allowed to interfere with reading, working, or singing psalms at the appointed times, you will find such impediments multi-

The Real John Wesley.

plied upon you, till at last all order and devotion will be lost."

As soon as the alphabet was mastered, instead of teaching them a, b, ab, etc., Mrs. Wesley taught them to read, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." These were the first words the Wesley children read; they then learned the second verse. Jewish mothers were careful that the first words the newly-born babe should hear should be, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord." This was whispered into the ear of the child just born. The primer in Mrs. Wesley's school was the Bible. This teacher says: "And it is almost incredible what a child may be taught in a quarter of a year by a vigorous application, if it had but a tolerable capacity and good health." Every one of her children, Kezzy alone excepted, "could read better in that time than most of the women can do as long as they live." A wonderful teacher was Susannah Wesley. "I wonder at your patience," said her most patient husband one day; "you have told that child twenty times that same thing." She replied, "Had I satisfied myself by mentioning the matter only nineteen times I should

At School and at College.

have lost all my labor ; you see it was the twentieth time that crowned the whole."

The primary teacher never knows how far she is molding the great future of some of the boys and girls before her. We admire the German custom of putting some of the best teachers and doctors of philosophy to teach in the primary schools. The Wesley boys showed the influence of their primary teacher through all their lives. She was able to follow them and advise them, in their English studies, all through their college courses. A wonderful teacher was she!

Those who did not go to college seem to have had no other teacher but their mother, excepting in their studies in the dead languages, which they took under their father. Her schoolroom and his study were the school-houses of the young Wesleys. Here, for about five and a half years, John Wesley was taught and fitted for the Charterhouse School, in London, for which he was nominated on January 28, 1714. He was then ten years and seven months old. What a tender age for a child to leave a little country village like Epworth, for the great city of London! To leave

The Real John Wesley.

a truly Christian home for a great public school! If ever a boy needs home and mother, surely it is at such an age.

Let us look at him as he leaves home that day. He is a handsome boy, though two years ago he was visited by that awful scourge, the smallpox. He is well-mannered, for this had been a part of his education, to treat servants respectfully, and even his brothers and sisters with dignity. His reverence for his parents is profound. He is a truly Christian boy. He has been taught the rudiments of Christian doctrine by his mother, including the Lord's Prayer, the Commandments, the Apostles' Creed, and all other things which a Christian ought to know. Her promise made at his baptism she had kept. Her manual of Christian doctrine, which she used in that schoolroom, is extant. It is written with her own hand. She believed in personal Christian work with her children. Each child had his day of the week, on which she met him alone, on the subject of personal religion. Thursday was John's day.

The result of this careful Christian nurture on John was, that he grew up in the

At School and at College.

nurture and admonition of the Lord. He did not then need "conversion," in the ordinary sense of that term. Having been redeemed by Christ, the second Adam, from all condemnation, he had not cast away "the free gift unto justification of life," but went out from that home to the London school a Christian child, a member of the kingdom of heaven, into which he had been born. That he, later in life, for a while at least, dated his regeneration as beginning at his baptism, which occurred a few hours after he was born, does not alter the fact that he was then a child of God and an heir of heaven.

His feelings on leaving home for the great city and school are not recorded. The parting of mother and father with a son had been gone through at least once before, and that in the case of the eldest son, Samuel, who was at this time an usher in Westminster School, London. We would like to read from John his impressions on reaching the old place, which was once a Carthusian monastery, so named from the mother-house of the monks, Chartreuse, near Grenoble, in France. It was built near Smith-

The Real John Wesley.

field, Newgate, and Old Bailey, in 1371. It was, therefore, three hundred and forty-three years old when John Wesley went to live there. From 1611, the year of the Authorized Version of the Bible, it had been used as a school for boys and a hospital or almshouse for poor men who had seen better days. Thomas Sutton was its founder. Here, until 1872, the school was carried on, when, it having been sold to the merchant tailors for their school purposes, the school was removed to Godalming, where are over five hundred pupils to-day, who are taught in new and better buildings. The hospital for the eighty poor brethren, each of whom is over fifty years of age, a member of the Church of England, unmarried, and who has been a householder, still remains. We have always enjoyed visiting them in the old place. Each "poor brother" is cloaked as in the olden time, when John Wesley saw them every day. Such names as Barrow, Blackstone, Addison, Steele, Thirlwall, Grote, Thackeray, Leech, and Eastlake, as well as John Wesley, are on the school-registers, though not all were charity pupils.

Concerning the curriculum of the school

At School and at College.

from 1714 to 1720, and the general life of the school, the historians can find practically nothing. We must be content to learn that they fitted boys for the universities or for practical life. If a charity-boy did not proceed to the university he received one hundred pounds to start him in business. If he went to Oxford or to Cambridge, he received forty pounds a year for three years, and one hundred pounds for the fourth year. Authorities differ in the first sum, but forty pounds, and not eighty pounds a year, seems to have been the correct sum in Wesley's time. This was a splendid charity for such a poor boy as John Wesley. The Duke of Buckingham, who got him into the Charterhouse School, deserves the praise of Methodism. The hard times he had there, through the fagging customs of those days, the proficiency he gained in English and Latin, the chief studies of the school, all helped to make him the man and the scholar which he afterward became. In 1719, after he had been there five years, his brother Samuel, then a teacher in Westminster School, wrote his father, saying: "My brother Jack, I can faithfully assure you, gives you no manner of dis-

The Real John Wesley.

couragement from breeding your third son a scholar." Three months later he writes: "Jack is with me, and a brave boy, learning Hebrew as fast as he can." Thus his intellectual progress there is assured.

He built up his body by following his father's advice to run around the garden of the school three times every morning. When the late Chaplain Milburn, the blind preacher, visited the school in 1854, Dr. Hale was its master. He was also Archdeacon of London. He treated the American preacher royally, and showed him over the school, giving most interesting points of history. Dr. Milburn more than once asked to be shown the garden. Dr. Hale wondered why he wanted to see it. Dr. Milburn said: "You can well understand that as a Methodist from across the sea I am curious to see the spot associated with the boyhood of John Wesley." "John Wesley!" exclaimed the master; "what had he to do with the Charterhouse and its garden?" He told him. "John Wesley educated here!" he cried; "you must be mistaken; I never heard of it before. And what had he to do with the garden?" When this same blind preacher re-

At School and at College.

visited the place in 1892 the guide took him everywhere else, and told him he had reserved the most interesting place until the last, the garden. He then told him that Dr. Hale discovered the fact of John Wesley's daily run around it, about forty years ago. He did not tell him that an American preacher told him about it. To this day the guide calls special attention to the garden and John Wesley. John Wesley loved to revisit the old school. The learned Dr. Thomas Walker was the schoolmaster in Wesley's day, and Andrew Tooke, author of "The Pantheon," etc., which was a text-book in those days and went through twenty-two editions, was the chief usher. He admired Wesley's diligence and scholarship.

Concerning his religious life at Charterhouse he himself shall speak. Turn to his journals for May, 1738, and read: "1. I believe, till I was about ten years old, I had not sinned away that 'washing of the Holy Ghost' which was given me in baptism, etc. 2. The next six or seven years were spent at school; where, outward restraints being removed, I was much more negligent than before,

The Real John Wesley.

even of outward duties, and almost continually guilty of outward sins, which I knew to be such, though they were not scandalous in the eye of the world. However, I still read the Scriptures and said my prayers morning and evening. And what I now hoped to be saved by was (1) not being so bad as other people, (2) having still a kindness for religion, and (3) reading the Bible, going to church, and saying my prayers."

We are glad he did not yield to the temptation to stop even saying his prayers, reading the Bible, and going to church, as too many young students have done since his day. But we think that, laying aside all prejudice in favor of John Wesley, which is hard to do, we must in truth and justice set it down that John Wesley entered that school a Christian, and left it a backslider, or at the very least a backslider in heart, who needed to be reclaimed from his evil ways. We accept his own testimony in this case.

Such was his standing when, in July, 1720, one week after his seventeenth birthday, he entered Christ Church College, Oxford University. "He was an undergraduate here, but took

At School and at College.

his degree and became a fellow at Lincoln College," says the present dean of Christ Church, Oxford, the Rev. Thomas B. Strong. Concerning his progress in scholarship here during the nearly six years of student life it is not necessary to say more than that he distinguished himself and laid the literary foundation for his great lifework. We are now more concerned in his spiritual condition during these years. Again he shall speak for himself. Under the same date, May, 1728, he writes of these years at Oxford, saying: "Being removed to the university for five years, I still said my prayers, both in public and in private, and read with the Scriptures several other books of religion, especially comments on the New Testament. Yet I had not all this while so much as a notion of inward holiness; nay, went on habitually, and, for the most part, very contentedly, in some or other known sin; indeed, with some intermission and short struggles, especially before and after the holy communion, which I was obliged to receive thrice a year. I can not tell what I hoped to be saved by now, when I was continually sinning against that little light I had, unless by those

The Real John Wesley.

transient fits of what many divines taught me to call repentance."

Thus John Wesley frankly and fairly confesses his sins during his years at the London and Oxford schools. In accepting his own estimate of himself during these years we are better able to magnify the converting grace of God which came to his heart later.

CHAPTER III.

John Wesley, Missionary.

"MISSIONER," John Wesley styled himself with reference to his work in America. He was born into a decidedly missionary atmosphere. Amidst the many duties of his Epworth parish, his father planned an elaborate missionary scheme by which he designed to care for the British settlers, "from Saint Helena to the farther Eastern countries." Surat was to become his center. Abyssinia he would "ever try to pierce into that country himself." Romanists were to be reached by books. As for the pure heathen, he proposed to "learn the Hindustan language; and when he had got master of their notions and way of reasoning, endeavor to bring over some of their Brahmins and common people to the Christian religion." All he asked was that one hundred pounds per annum might be allowed me, and forty I must

The Real John Wesley.

pay my curate in my absence," and provision "for my family in case of my decease in those countries." Within a century after he wrote these words the followers of his son had undertaken this very work. Once again the Epworth Rectory is all ablaze with missionary fire. General Oglethorpe has gone to Georgia. He sailed with one hundred and sixteen persons in November, 1732. Poor debtors and Protestant exiles from other countries were to have a chance to live and prosper there. The Epworth rector and his oldest son, Samuel, were enthusiastic in the cause. He says, "Ten years ago I would gladly have devoted the remainder of my life and labors to that place." Samuel Wesley, Jr., gave six guineas and "a pewter chalice and patine for present use in Georgia until silver ones were had." A year later he secured "two silver chalices and two patines for the use of the first Church in the town of Savannah." The church and the services perished in the flames. The Custom-house of Savannah is said to be on the site where it stood. Little did the old rector think that two of his sons, John and Charles, would, within two years, start on the same mission to Geor-

John Wesley, Missionary.

gia in which he himself longed to labor. Meanwhile Oglethorpe had returned to England to get missionaries. He and the Indian chief, Tomo-chi-chi, whom he brought with him, awakened great interest in the cause. The old rector was now dead, and his son John had come to London to present to Queen Caroline a copy of his father's great work, "*Dissertationes in Librum Jobi.*" Some of John's friends had designated him for work in Georgia, and Dr. Burton introduced him to Oglethorpe. John demurred. They pleaded, he resisted. One of his objections was his widowed mother's need of him. "Would he go if her consent could be obtained?" He would accept her decision. Her reply to him was: "Had I twenty sons I should rejoice that they were all so employed, though I should never see them more." His brother Charles also offered, and was accepted as Oglethorpe's secretary. John was not pleased at his clerical brother's appointment. John always had a reason for his new departures. In this mission he speaks for himself and for his three coadjutors, Charles Delamotte, of London; Benjamin Ingham, and his brother Charles: "Our end in leaving our

The Real John Wesley.

native country was not to avoid want (God having given us plenty of temporal blessings), nor to gain the dung or dross of riches, or honor; but simply this, to save our souls: to live wholly to the glory of God." "I hope," he said to a lady, "to learn the true gospel of Christ by preaching it to the heathen. They have no comments to construe away the text; no vain philosophy to corrupt it; no luxurious, sensual, covetous, ambitious expounders to soften its unpleasant truths. They are as little children, humble, willing to learn, and eager to do the will of God, and, consequently, they shall know of every doctrine I preach, whether it be of God. By these, therefore, I hope to learn the purity of that faith which was once delivered to the saints, the genuine sense and full extent of those laws which none can understand who mind earthly things." "Why, Wesley, if they are all this already, what more can Christianity do for them?" was the lady's reply.

In order clearly to understand John Wesley, the missionary, these reasons and this object must be ever kept in mind. He did not leave England to do English parish work in

John Wesley, Missionary.

Georgia. He could not have been induced to do this. Such work even at Epworth he was not willing to do, until strongly urged by a sense of filial duty. He was glad when his offer to succeed his father was declined in favor of another. His work in Georgia was this very kind of work, not from his choice, but because the Rev. Mr. Quincy left the parish work at Savannah, and John Wesley had to take his place, much to his disappointment. He longed to work wholly on the raw heathen, the Indians of that territory. He often tried to make up for his disappointment by excursions and missions to foreigners, and learned German and Spanish on these trips in order to reach people, but work for the Indians was the purpose of his mission. Had he been permitted to labor wholly among them his Georgian record would have been very far different. But he himself believed that all things worked together for his good in America. Others also see that this was his school where he should learn valuable lessons for his future life and ministry. Paul needed trial in Arabia, Wesley in Georgia; both became better apostles therefor. His contact with the Moravians,

The Real John Wesley.

which meant so much for him; his descent from High, even Highest Churchism; his failures in experimentation, and consequent humiliation; his unreadiness to fall in love for more than a decade, were among the good things he got out of his mission to Georgia. 'The events of his sixteen weeks' outward voyage, are they not written in all the Methodist histories?

Look at our young missionary as he lands. It is in February, 1736.

"Friday, 6th, about eight in the morning, we first set foot on American ground. It was a small, uninhabited island, over against Tybee. Mr. Oglethorpe led us to a rising ground, where we all kneeled down to give thanks. He then took boat for Savannah. When the rest of the people were come on shore we called our little flock together for prayers. Several parts of the second lesson (Mark vi) were wonderfully suited to the occasion; in particular the account of the courage and sufferings of John the Baptist; our Lord's directions to the first preachers of his gospel, and their toiling at sea, and deliverance with these comfortable words 'It is I; be not afraid.'"

John Wesley, Missionary.

John Wesley is readily picked out from that company. He is now in this thirty-third year, little in stature, weighs only one hundred and twenty-two pounds, handsome face full of refinement, aquiline nose, bright, piercing eyes, and long, curly hair; in dress, a pattern of neatness and simplicity. Alas! some of those handsome curls are doomed to be cut off from one side of his head by a wicked woman of that place, but he did not stop preaching until they grew again, but entered the pulpit under this hirsute disadvantage, much to the curiosity of his congregation. His ecclesiastical portrait would be about as follows: A regular Oxford don; ritualistically, a pink of the first quality; set for the defense of the Book of Common Prayer and the Bible. He held double daily services and weekly communions. On Sundays he "divided the public prayers according to the original appointment of the Church." He refused to baptize a babe because the parents would not let him dip the babe into the water. He refused to administer the communion to a good Lutheran, because he had not been episcopally baptized. To this latter he refers in September, 1749, after print-

The Real John Wesley.

ing a letter from this very man, saying: "What a truly Christian piety and simplicity breathe in these lines! And yet this very man, when I was at Savannah, did I refuse to admit to the Lord's table because he was not baptized by a minister who had been episcopally ordained. Can any one carry on High Church zeal higher than this? *How well have I been beaten with my own staff!*" His zeal corresponded with the well-known zeal of the present High Church wing of the Anglican Church and her daughter. No fair-minded critic can omit to mention this excellency of theirs. We have seen it in many cities, and gladly speak it to their praise. Bishop Hendrix, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, owns the very journals which John Wesley wrote during about nine of the twenty-two months and twenty days of Wesley's stay in America. It has hourly entries for nearly every day from 5 A. M. until 9 P. M. It is a very rare treasure. The enthusiastic owner, who has gone over every step, journal in hand, is just the man to own such a prize. We hope he will give to the press a full and complete copy in the near future. We are hungry for

John Wesley, Missionary.

it. Preaching, teaching, journeying, and pastoral visitations fill all but study hours and eating moments. His pastoral visitations he did daily during the hottest hours, when his parishioners could not work. Socially he made himself agreeable, but was very sparing of his precious time. On the matter of dress he was very narrow. He would have liked his people to eschew all costly clothing and to appear in white and simple raiment. Sophia Hopkey knew this, and dressed to please him, setting her cap to catch him. She caught him, but the Moravians delivered him from her net. She married another man, one Williamson; they both, and her uncle, made a change of pastors necessary in that parish. Of all this we will not now speak particularly. Other persecutions are recorded, and they all show John Wesley to have been in every respect a much abused man. The greatest weakness mentioned is his credulity and easy-to-be-deceivedness at this period of his life. He was so pure and noble himself that he credited others with too much of these good qualities.

“Was he a converted man at this time?” some one asks. No wonder you ask, after what

The Real John Wesley.

he himself once wrote: "I who went to America to convert others was never myself converted to God." This statement, made under peculiar circumstances, has been altogether too much overworked. It began to be so in Wesley's own day, and later he himself wrote under it: "*I am not sure of this.*" (See Journal, February 29, 1738.) His evangelical conversion occurred after this; but who that knows, would dare say, that John Wesley, the missionary, was not a regenerated man? The "society for the Propagation of the Gospel" paid him a stipend of fifty pounds a year. This he at first stoutly refused, preferring to live on his fellowship; but his brother Samuel urged him to take it, even if he afterwards gave it away.

Our missionary made three visits to Charleston, South Carolina. The first in July, 1736, when he went to see his brother Charles off for England, after being only about five months in the country. His second visit was in April, 1737. On one of these visits he gave to the press the first Methodist Hymn-book; he says, in 1736—the printed page of the fac-simile reprint says 1737. The title is, "Collections of Psalms and Hymns." Perhaps

John Wesley, Missionary.

he gave it on his first visit and received it printed on his second; or, "1737" may be a printer's error. This book was lost sight of for more than a century. The references to it baffled the hymnologists. All is now clear, excepting the two dates. His third visit to Charleston was in December, 1737, when he escaped to England from the hands of his unjust persecutors.

His missionary work was far from being a failure. All went prosperously for more than a year. During this time occurred what he calls "The second rise of Methodism, at Savannah, in 1736, when twenty or thirty persons met in my house." This was a meeting in addition to regular church services—a "society meeting." Whitefield, who succeeded him, testifies to John Wesley's great success as a missionary in America, saying: "The good Mr. John Wesley has done in America is inexpressible. His name is very precious among the people, and he has laid a foundation that, I hope, neither man nor devils will ever be able to shake. O that I may follow him as he followed Christ!" If a successor is unable to judge as to the success of a predecessor, who is able?

The Real John Wesley.

Slavery was prohibited in Georgia in Wesley's day. On his trips to Carolina he first became acquainted with the Negroes. He at once became interested in them. He questioned them on their religion, instructed them, and watched the effects of his teaching. He talked with the planters, and, on returning to his home in Georgia, he formulated plans for the evangelization of the African. So far-sighted was he as to their needs, and as to the best methods of helping them, that the plans he made were substantially the very plans operated in the Methodist missions before the war.

Concerning his work among the Indians, Bishop E. E. Hoss, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, wrote to the *Methodist Recorder*, of London, in November, 1902:

JOHN WESLEY AND THE INDIANS.

"I have thought that it might be a matter of interest to the English Methodists to know that the Muskogee or Creek Indians, to whom John Wesley went as a missionary, are now largely a Christian people, and made so by the labors of Methodist ministers. Our Church is the leading denomination among them. For a long

John Wesley, Missionary.

time Colonel Samuel Chacote, a brave Confederate officer, and afterwards an itinerant minister, was the head chief of the tribe. He was a man of mark in every way, the particular friend of Bishops Pierce, McTyeire, and other such leaders of Methodism. His son is an excellent local preacher.

“Our Indian Mission Conference has about five thousand communicants among the civilized tribes, and a good many among the blanket Indians. It also has about twenty-five thousand white members, for the territory is rapidly filling up with immigrants. The recent session of the body, over which I had the honor to preside, was a most interesting occasion. At the love-feast two or three interpreters were needed. One of the daily sessions was opened by prayer in Chickasaw, followed by the Lord’s Prayer in English. The ordination of elders was deeply impressive. I laid hands, among others, on Moty Tiger, the present second chief of the Creeks, and also upon Madison E. Jefferson, a full-blood Choctaw. For each of these an interpreter was needed, and this made the service a little lengthy, but not at all wearisome. It was a joy to my soul to see these red

The Real John Wesley.

men, reclaimed by the power of our gospel, standing erect among their white brethren, and answering the questions, and taking the vows with a seriousness which none could doubt. Moty Tiger, in particular, is a picturesque character, fifty-five years of age, tall and straight, with an eagle eye and a shock of coal-black hair. He would be noticed anywhere. Assisting in the ordination was William Jim-boy, a full-blooded Choctaw, who goes on the superannuate list. What would our great Founder say if he knew these things?"

With such facts before us, we must conclude that John Wesley was a very successful missionary. Every true follower of Jesus, and of Wesley, has the missionary spirit.

CHAPTER IV.

John Wesley—His Conversion. When and Where?

WHEN was John Wesley converted? The answer to this question depends upon the answer to another question: What is conversion? On turning to the Bible, the book that Wesley loved so well, for the answer, we find the word is used only once therein, and that at Acts xv, 3. On finding this, we wonder at the prominence it has gained in our Christian nomenclature. We find convert and its derivatives used only fifteen times in the English Bible, five times in the Old Testament and ten times in the New Testament; twice as a noun, once in the Old Testament, and once in the New Testament; and thirteen times as a verb, four times in the Old, where it is three times in the passive voice, and once in the active. In the New Testament it occurs as a verb nine times. In the Authorized Version it is rendered in the passive voice

The Real John Wesley.

seven times, and twice in the active. In the Revised Version it is rendered in the active voice in all the nine times it occurs.

In examining John Wesley's writings we find the word very seldom used, and are a little surprised, until we come to his first letter to Bishop Lavington, in Volume IX, at page 8, where he asks his persecutor, "Do you know what conversion is?" and then in parenthesis he writes: "a term, indeed, which I very rarely use, because it rarely occurs in the New Testament." Again we admire John Wesley's Biblical scholarship and careful use of words. If his biographers and followers had been as sparing in the use of this term "conversion" as is the Bible, and as was Wesley himself, much misunderstanding would have been avoided. A good dictionary is sometimes one of the best of commentaries. When Webster defines "conversion" as "the act of turning or changing from one state or condition to another," he gives us good theology, and puts the turning where it belongs. Man's duty is to convert, or turn to God, then God will change him into a new creation. When the penitent and believing sinner turns to God for salvation,

His Conversion. When and Where?

through Jesus Christ, God changes him by a birth from above. John Wesley's favorite phrase for this change wrought by God upon the sinner who was converted, or turned himself, is the "new birth." We use conversion, and regeneration, both of which words are used very sparingly in the Bible, the latter only once in the sense in which we use it, to include the whole process and result by which a sinner becomes a child of God through faith in Jesus Christ. Why not be more Wesleyan in our use of these terms? We would then be more Biblical in our phraseology, and would have a clearer theology.

The question now before us is, When did John Wesley become a child of God? When did he pass out of the state of condemnation into that of justification? When was he changed from being a child of wrath into being a child of God? When was he "converted" in the popular sense of that term?

The answer usually given is, "the date was May 24, 1738, the place was in Aldersgate Street, London;" for does he not write, under this date: "In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where

The Real John Wesley.

one was reading Luther's 'Preface to the Epistle to the Romans.' About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation and an assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death." This was most certainly a memorable epoch in the heart-life of John Wesley, and a pivotal point in Methodism; but that John Wesley entered the meeting a child of the devil and came out of it a child of God, who can believe? He himself did not unto the day of his death. The truth seems to be that John Wesley, like very many other Christians, some of whom are Methodists, did not know the exact time when, and place where, he was "converted to God." But, unlike many of us, his followers, who have foolishly done, he does not seem to have worried himself about it, when he heard others tell just when and where they passed from death unto life. The possession of natural life is of more importance than the knowledge of date and place of one's birth

His Conversion. When and Where?

into this world; so Wesley put the emphasis on the possession of the Divine life within the soul. The spot where his heart was strangely warmed was doubtless sacred to him. We once were led to it by the Rev. Nehemiah Curnock, editor of the *Methodist Recorder* of London. We could have no safer guide. No trace of the building or its surroundings remains. It was a society room, on the site of which a Moravian Meeting-house was afterwards erected. The place was called "Nettleton Court" until 1887. It "lay on the east side of Aldersgate Street, midway between Little Britain and Jewin Street." "It is near Shaftesbury Hall." We went from Aldersgate Street into Falcon Street, and up Castle Street into Nicholl Square, then turned into a narrow passage which was once Nettleton Court. Warehouses now stand on the site. At the Ecumenical Conference some were told "to go to the British Tea-table shop, near to Jewin Street, and take their seat at one end of the table, near the far end of the shop, on the ground floor, and they would be as near to the exact spot as it is possible to get." Certainly this region was holy ground, when on May 24, 1738, John Wesley's heart-warming

The Real John Wesley.

occurred there. But Wesley was a holy man before he went there that evening. Let us very briefly review his life up to this evening. He was born June 28, 1703, thirty-five years, less one month and four days, before. To a godly parentage was added a most careful Christian nurture which had not been in vain. For nearly thirteen years he had been an ordained clergyman of the Church of England (ordained deacon, September 19, 1725,) ; a Fellow of Lincoln College, for more than twelve years; curate at Wroote for about two years; a Christian worker among prisoners and the poor for nearly eight years; a missionary to Georgia for a little over two years; and, since his return on February 17th of this same year, 1738, he had been diligent in good works up till this memorable evening of May 24, 1738. Of course, we all know he might have been and have done all this, and yet not have been a regenerated man. His own language, if taken as he first wrote it in the early editions of his journal, leaving out his annotations and corrections, made before he republished it, certainly would lead us to conclude that for all this time he had not been a "converted man." I quote

His Conversion. When and Where?

from a copy of the second edition, printed in MDCCXLIII (1743). "It is now two years and almost four months since I left my native country in order to teach the Georgian Indians the nature of Christianity. But what have I learned myself in the meantime? Why (what I the least of all suspected) that I, who went to America to convert others, was never myself converted to God. I am not mad though I thus speak; but I speak the words of Truth and Soberness: if haply some of those who still dream may awake, and see, that as I am, so are they." But, in later editions of this journal, after the words "was never myself converted to God," he put an asterisk, with the foot-note, "I am not sure of this." Continuing this quotation from the early edition of the journal we find, "This, then, I have learned in the Ends of the Earth, that I am *fallen short of the glory of God*; that my whole heart is *altogether corrupt and abominable*, and that, consequently, my whole life (seeing it can not be, that an *evil tree* should *bring forth good fruit*); that, *alienated as I am from the life of God*, I am a *child of wrath, an heir of hell*. But in later editions he does not italicize, and puts a dagger

The Real John Wesley.

after the words, "a child of wrath," with the foot-note, "I believe not."

The whole long entry for February 1, 1738, will well repay careful reading, in the later editions. It proves unmistakably that, when he made the first entry, he was discouraged and doubtful, but on reviewing God's dealings with him up to that date, he had been mistaken. No one was more ready to correct his own errors than was John Wesley.

That he was, in his early experiences, subject to such spells may be seen from his Journal for January 4, 1739, nearly eight months after his heart had been "strangely warmed." Though written in the third person, he is evidently giving his own experience, saying: "My friends affirm I am mad, because I said I was not a Christian a year ago. I affirm, I am not a Christian now. Indeed, what I might have been I know not, had I been faithful to the grace given, when, expecting nothing less, I received such a sense of the forgiveness of my sins as till then I never knew. But that I am not a Christian at this day, I as assuredly know as that Jesus is the Christ," etc. On October 30, 1738, five months after his heart had been

His Conversion. When and Where?

strangely warmed, he wrote his brother Samuel, "This witness of the Spirit I have not, but I patiently wait for it."

Although these are the last entries of this kind that we have found, yet they clearly show that, for several months after May 24, 1738, John Wesley had an undulating experience. It seems as though it was not until he threw himself wholly into evangelistic work that he had a settled and abiding assurance of the favor of God. This year among the Moravians we regard as not the year of his conversion to God, but the year of his struggling into the fuller light of God's favor. It may well be called the year of his "evangelical conversion," but not the year of his conversion to God. The experience of May 24, 1738, was not that of his justification, nor of his entire sanctification, but of a deepening of his spiritual life, an enlargement of his spiritual vision, and of preparation for the great evangelistic work to which God had called him, and for which God was then fitting him. Not a little mental confusion is apparent in his records of this year. Moravian clouds encompassed him during much of the time; but he felt his way through them and came out into

The Real John Wesley.

the sunlight, in which he walked until he lay down within the light of God, aged eighty-eight years.

If not converted to God on May 24, 1738, when was he? Being, like other children, born into the "Kingdom of heaven" through the unconditional benefits of Christ's atonement, did he, by God's blessing upon the Christian nurture he received at Epworth, continue a member of that Kingdom, by his own free choice, on coming to the stage of personal responsibility, so that he did not need "conversion" in the popular sense of that term, the catastrophic sense? That he passed this stage of being without willfully departing from God seemed so clear to his godly parents that he was admitted to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper when eight years of age. As long as he remained in that Christian home he gave evidence of true Christian life. That he counted himself regenerated by his baptism, which occurred a few hours after he was born, is not surprising. To this he held until a larger baptism by the Holy Spirit taught him more perfectly. The change of environment, from the Christian home at Ep-

His Conversion. When and Where?

worth to the Charterhouse School at London, and Christ Church College, Oxford, was unfavorable to the piety of a boy of eleven years, and a youth of seventeen years. Whoever studies the records of these years, from his eleventh to his twenty-second year, must conclude that the student John Wesley did not follow on to know the Lord. He did willfully depart from the living God. Whilst he did not give up all the external forms of religion, he was, on his own confession, not a Christian.

The year of his conversion to God was 1725. His college course is now drawing to a close. The question of entering into "holy orders" is now before him. This throws him back to the question of his own spiritual condition. He reviews his student life. He is convinced of the evil of his ways. He begins the study of such books as Thomas à Kempis's "Christian Pattern," and Taylor's "Holy Living and Dying." He corresponds with his godly mother about them, and about the spiritual life. She is delighted at the change. He now meets with his first religious friend since he left home, eleven years ago. Now comes the turning

The Real John Wesley.

point, let him tell it : "I began to alter the whole form of my conversation and to set in earnest upon a new life. I set apart an hour or two a day for religious retirement. I communicated every week. I watched against all sin, whether in word or deed. I began to aim at, and to pray for, inward holiness ; so that now, doing so much and living so good a life, I doubted not that I was a good Christian." If this is not a "turning to the Lord," in what does such a turning consist? That he did not then have a clear theology on the subject of regeneration does not invalidate his conversion any more than it does that of multitudes of Christians who could not formulate the doctrine of justification by faith, and regeneration by the Holy Ghost.

Referring to Taylor's "Holy Living and Dying," he thus gives his religious experience at this time, saying : "In reading several parts of this book, I was exceedingly affected ; that part in particular which relates to the purity of intention. Instantly I resolved to dedicate all my life to God—all my thoughts and words and actions—being thoroughly convinced there was

His Conversion. When and Where?

no medium, but that every part of my life (not some only) must either be a sacrifice to God, or myself; that is, in effect, the devil." If this is not the language of a newly-converted soul, what can it be? The fact that he, with Christians generally in that age, had not heard of the Holy Spirit as the assurer of sins forgiven, does not invalidate the fact of his having entered upon the new life, following the commandments of God. From this time on, John Wesley is a new creature in Christ Jesus. He is a disciple still, with very much to learn from his Great Teacher, but a diligent learner of Christ, and worker in his vineyard. He knew himself to be in a state of salvation, for under date of July 29, 1725, he writes his mother: "But I am persuaded we may know if we are now in a state of salvation, since that is expressly promised in the Holy Scriptures to our sincere endeavors, and we are, surely, able to judge of our own sincerity." This extract shows how nearly he came to the great truth of Christian assurance, which he realized in Aldersgate Street about thirteen years later, when he felt his heart to be "strangely warmed."

The Real John Wesley.

From our careful study of this question, "When was John Wesley converted to God?" we give the answer: In the year 1725, exact date and place unknown, but somewhere, and at some time, before his ordination as deacon, by Bishop Potter, September 19, 1725.

CHAPTER V.

John Wesley, Educator.

THE flaming evangelist and the great educator have but very seldom been found in the same person. They combine in John Wesley. The whole Christian world knows him as the great evangelist of the centuries; but his work as an educator has not been so clearly presented. It should be emphasized, it must be, in any just estimate of his marvelous life and work.

His work as an educator began with his Fellowship of Lincoln College, Oxford, to which he was elected on March 17, 1726, and which he held for more than a quarter of a century. "Sometime Fellow of Lincoln College," he was pleased to declare himself to the end of his life. His father was very pleased at his appointment, and wrote him four days after his election, addressing him as "Dear Mr. Fellow-

John Wesley, Educator.

elect of Lincoln," the "elect" referring to the usual probationary term. On April 1st, he wrote: "What will be my own fate before the summer be over, God only knows—*sed passi graviora*. Wherever I am, my Jack is Fellow of Lincoln." In October of that year, 1726, John Wesley began his real work as an educator. He was "Greek lecturer and moderator of the classes." Dr. Overton says truly that, "These appointments have been strangely misunderstood; perhaps a Lincoln man may be allowed to explain them. 'Greek lecturer' does not mean teacher of Greek generally; it is a technical term, the explanation of which illustrates . . . the traditions of piety as well as learning which belonged to Lincoln College. The object was to secure some sort of religious instruction to all the undergraduates; and for this purpose a special officer was appointed with the modest stipend of £20 a year, who was to hold a lecture every week in the College Hall, which all the undergraduates were to attend, on the Greek Testament. As became a learned society the lecture was to be on the original language, but the real object was to teach divinity, not Greek."

John Wesley, Educator.

The duty of "Moderator of the Classes" was to sit in the College Hall, and preside over the "disputations," which were held at Lincoln College every day in the week except Sunday. Bishop Rotherham lays great stress upon these disputations in his statutes for the college, and gives minute directions as to how they are to be conducted; it will be remembered that John Locke found "disputations" prevalent at Christ Church seventy years before, and lamented the "unprofitableness of those verbal niceties." John Wesley seems to have thought otherwise, at any rate so far as the moderator himself was concerned. The plan was this: A thesis was proposed; the disputants argued on one side or the other; the moderator had to listen to the arguments, and then to decide with whom the victory lay. "I could not avoid," says Wesley, "acquiring thereby some degree of expertness in arguing, and especially in discovering and pointing out well-covered and plausible fallacies. I have since found abundant reason to praise God for giving me this honest art." We are grateful to Dr. Overton for this explanation of these high-sounding terms which we, with many others, so long misunderstood.

The Real John Wesley.

In three terms, until the summer of 1727, he taught at Lincoln; then went back to Epworth and Wroote, to serve as curate under his father. He probably did some teaching there, as was the custom, but of this we find no record. The autumn of 1729 finds him back to his work at Lincoln, at the summons of Dr. Morley, the rector of his college. There were no "college tutors," or "coaches," as now understood, at the Oxford of those days. Wesley, in addition to his other college work, had "to take the charge of some young gentlemen," which meant moral oversight as well as private teaching. Eleven young men were committed to his charge. James Hervey and John White-lamb were among these. Wesley's conscientiousness appears when he writes, "that he should as soon have thought of committing a highway robbery as of failing to give them instruction six days in every week." From 1729 to 1735 he was one of the educators at Lincoln College.

Schools for the poorer children of England, about that time, were a crying need. "From a report of the charity schools, we learn that in 1715 there were, throughout the Kingdom,

John Wesley, Educator.

1,193 schools for the education of the children of the poor, containing 26,920 scholars." The keen eye and tender heart of the young college professor, then twenty-six years of age (1729), saw and felt this great need of schools for the poor. He was quick to provide for it. On his return he found the "Holy Club" formed. He soon became the head of it, and had it meet in his own rooms. They visited prisons and schools. "One of the schools they visited was a school which Wesley himself had founded, the mistress of which he paid, and some, if not all, of the children of which he clothed." This seems to have been his first attempt at popular education. Of this school he was founder, banker, and clothier, as well as superintendent of instruction. The next of Wesley's schools of which we find any record is at Savannah, Georgia, in 1737. He is now thirty-four years of age. He had been in Georgia about a year and a quarter. His friend Delamotte taught one school, and he another. In connection with his teaching there a beautiful trait of his character appears. Some of Delamotte's scholars had to come to school barefooted. The shod scholars made fun of

The Real John Wesley.

them, and the teacher could not stop it. The astute Wesley thought he could, and he did it in this way. They changed schools for a week. Wesley appeared at the school barefooted. The shoeless ones were encouraged, the shod ones chagrined; some of them even put off their shoes and stockings, and went barefooted, as did the schoolmaster and his poorer scholars. At this time, and down to February 1, 1738, the day on which he landed in England, John Wesley had been the student, the philanthropist, the curate, the teacher, and the missionary; but from May 24, 1738, the day of his evangelical conversion, he began a new career, having received a new calling to become an evangelist. His visit to the Moravians and his experiences in London all fitted him for his distinctively evangelistic work, which he began at Bristol, April 2, 1739, and which ended only with his life on earth. He came to Bristol at the urgent call of Whitefield, who was in the midst of a great revival at Bristol and Kingswood, its suburb. Arriving March 31st, the next day, Sunday, he sees Whitefield preaching out of doors, and the next day, Monday, April

John Wesley, Educator.

2, 1739, he "submits to be more vile," and himself preaches in the open air. Did he cease to be an educator when he became an evangelist? No. His great educational work began that day, for whilst he was preaching his first open-air sermon in Bristol, Whitefield, at Kingswood, was projecting a school for the children of the colliers. On that very day a stone was consecrated, and set upon a site. This became the first school of Methodism, "The Kingswood School." Concerning this earliest school at Kingswood, there is much confusion in the histories. In recent years additional data have been gathered, and these beginnings are made clear. The clearest putting of the case we know of is that by the Rev. John S. Simon, now governor of Didsbury Wesleyan College, England, and formerly of Bristol and Kingswood. In the *Methodist Recorder*, of London, for November 11, 1897, he writes of "The Third Jubilee of Kingswood School," saying:

"The painful historian will probably raise an objection to the statement that, on midsummer-day, 1898, Kingswood School will complete the one hundred and fiftieth year of

The Real John Wesley.

its existence. Surcharged with knowledge, he will suggest that Wesley had a school in Kingswood in 1740, and that the projected celebration is somewhat belated. As we wish to stand on good terms with accurate men, we will state the case dispassionately, and will try to show that the celebration of the third jubilee of the school next year is according to the fitness of things.

“On Monday, April 2, 1739, George Whitefield, having taken a sorrowful leave of the crowds that attended his preaching in Bristol, found himself, about two o’clock, at Kingswood. The colliers, unknown to him, had prepared ‘an hospitable entertainment.’ They were much excited about the school which had been promised them, and they insisted that he should, there and then, lay its foundation-stone. In his Journal he says: ‘At length I complied, and a man giving me a piece of ground, in case Mr. C—— should refuse to grant them any, I laid a stone; and then kneeled down, and prayed God that the gates of hell might not prevail against our design. The colliers said Amen; and, after I had given them a word of exhortation, suit-

John Wesley, Educator.

able to the occasion, I took my leave.' The stone thus laid marked the spot where the school was to be built. It would probably have remained in solitude if John Wesley had not entered into and completed Whitefield's design.

"On Tuesday, June 26, 1739, we catch sight of Wesley standing under a little sycamore-tree, which then grew in the middle of Kingswood. A violent storm had driven him to take shelter beneath its broad, overlapping leaves. The sycamore stands near a house which has begun to rise from the earth—a house which, as Wesley tells us, is designed for a school. Above the noise of the pelting of the storm and the murmur of the crowd, we hear the clear voice of the preacher declaring that, 'As the rain cometh down . . . from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, . . . so shall my Word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.'

"John Wesley, describing the site on which

The Real John Wesley.

the school was being built, tells us that it was 'in the middle of the wood, between the London and Bath Roads, not far from that called Two Mile Hill, about three measured miles from Bristol.' It is uncertain whether this was the spot on which Whitefield placed the stone. From Wesley's statement concerning the origin of the school we should be inclined to think that another site was secured. In a letter to the Rev. Mr. Church, speaking of the schoolhouse at Kingswood, he says, 'I bought the ground where it stands, and paid for the building it, partly from the contributions of my friends (one of whom contributed fifty pounds), partly from the income of my own fellowship.' A letter to Whitefield, written in June, 1741, sheds light upon several matters connected with the erection of the school. In this letter Wesley says: 'Two years since your design was to build the colliers a school, that their children also might be taught to fear the Lord; to this end you collected some money more than once; how much I can not say till I have my papers. But this I know, it was not near one-half of what has been expended on the work. This design

John Wesley, Educator.

you then recommended to me, and I pursued it with all my might, through such a train of difficulties as, I might be bold to say, you have not yet met with in your life. For many months I collected money wherever I was, and began building, though I had not then a quarter of the money requisite to finish. However, taking all the debt upon myself, the creditors were willing to stay; and then it was that I took possession of it in my own name; that is, when the foundation was laid; and I immediately made my will, fixing my brother and you to succeed me therein.'

"The ear that trieth words will be conscious of a little sharpness of tone in this description. It was justifiable. Whitefield, in a moment of irritation, had accused Wesley of conduct of which he was incapable; and it was necessary that the facts should be severely outlined.

"The school, when completed, consisted of a large room, having four small rooms at either end. It was finished in the spring of 1740, and the colliers' children were gathered into it and taught. For some years the large room was also used for preaching and for the

The Real John Wesley.

meetings held in connection with the Kingswood Society. The position was of such importance that John Cennick, the first lay preacher employed by Wesley, was appointed to superintend the Society and the school, and he continued to do so until 1741, when he separated himself from the Methodist society. The room at the school proving too small for the congregation, Wesley, on Monday, April 7, 1746, laid the first stone of the preaching-house, which still exists, in a badly-dilapidated condition, in the group of buildings clustering in the inclosure on Kingswood Hill. The mind's eye, searching the past, perceives before 1748, the school for the colliers' children, and the chapel, standing near the sycamore-tree, under which Wesley delighted to preach.

"In 1748 Wesley committed himself to a new departure in the sphere of education. He wished to create a school in which children might be brought up in the fear of God, 'and at the utmost distance, as from vice in general, so in particular from idleness and effeminacy.' Certain tracts on education having fallen into his hands, he studied them carefully. He also conversed closely on the sub-

The Real John Wesley.

ject with sensible men, and made particular inquiries concerning some of the most celebrated schools in Holland and Germany. In addition, his own experience as an old Carthusian, furnished him with fruitful suggestions. He believed that he had discovered the faults of the great public schools, and that he was in possession of a theory which, if carried out, would place the school which he was projecting in the front rank of English educational establishments. Having matured his design, he determined that it should be realized. His eyes turned towards Kingswood Hill as the most suitable spot on which his experiment might be tried. When the chapel was built there a room was attached to it which was large enough for the children of the colliers; and, we judge from a sentence in 'Myles's Chronological History,' they were removed to it. Writing in 1803, Myles says that this school was then in existence, and that it was supported by the contributions of the members of the Kingswood Society. The transfer of the colliers' children to the room at the end of the chapel left the original schoolhouse free for Wesley's use. But it was too small for

The Real John Wesley.

his purpose, so it had to be enlarged. By the 'enlargement' of the school, Wesley was able to accommodate fifty children, besides masters and servants, reserving one room and a small study for himself. He was much aided in his enterprise by the gift of £800 from some unknown lady, and we judge that the 'enlargement' of the school did not involve him in financial difficulties.

"The new school was intended 'for the children of the Methodists and for the sons of itinerant preachers.' At a later period it was resolved that a reserve of young preachers should be kept at the school, a resolution which is very suggestive! The burden of maintaining the school was borne by the whole of the societies, collections being made in the preaching-houses throughout the Kingdom. These facts show that the new school was altogether different from the school of the colliers' children, which was commenced in 1739. There was, we think, some close structural and material relation between the two schools, but in character, in pupils, and in aims they were widely divided."

Wesley placed a tablet on the front of this

John Wesley, Educator.

school, on which was inscribed: "In gloriam Dei Optimi Maximi, in usum Ecclesiæ et Republicæ"—To the glory of God and the benefit of Church and State. Underneath, in Hebrew characters, was יְתוּה יֵדֵת —"The Lord will provide." His motto is certainly up to date. In addition to various alterations during Wesley's day, in 1822 a new building was added. It stood opposite the old one. It was opened October 11, 1822. The *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine* for 1822 has a full account of the opening services, including Latin and English orations and poems. This "new schoolroom at Kingswood" was, with the other buildings, save the chapel, utterly demolished in 1893. We are glad to have many times explored them whilst standing. A pen-picture of this school in 1749, one year after the enlargement, is found in a letter of Charles Wesley, dated "3d of March, 1749." He says: "I spent half an hour with my brother at Kingswood, which is now very much like a college. Twenty-one boarders are there, and a dozen students, his sons and pupils in the gospel. I believe he is now laying the foundations of many generations." "Once a week,

The Real John Wesley.

also, he [John Wesley] spent an hour with the assembled children of the four Kingswood schools; namely, the boys boarded in the new house, the girls boarded in the old; the boys in the day-school taught by James Harding, and the girls taught in the day-school by Sarah Dimmock."

For this school he wrote and edited text-books, and to it he gave constant attention until his dying day. He loved the place, though it had given him so much care, and sometimes sorrow of heart. Only eight months before he died he wrote, at his home in Newcastle: "In this and Kingswood house, were I to do my own will, I should choose to spend the short remainder of my days. But it can not be; this is not my rest." (Journals, June 4, 1790.) Scholars "were to be taken in between the years of six and twelve, in order to be taught reading, writing, arithmetic, English, French, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, history, geography, chronology, rhetoric, logic, ethics, geometry, algebra, physics, and music." Considering that none of these studies were elective, but all required, and that there was to be no play—for "he who plays when he is a child will

John Wesley, Educator.

play when he becomes a man"—we do not wonder that the children all had to rise at four in the morning, and spend an hour in private reading, meditation, singing, and prayer. There were no holidays in that school in Wesley's day. Certainly Wesley, good and kind as he was, even to a fault, did not understand child nature. Yet, in 1769, he writes it "comes nearer a Christian school than any I know in the Kingdom." In 1781 he says: "Kingswood is infinitely superior to either Oxford or Cambridge." A full and complete history of this school has been published in England. Every Methodist educator should obtain a copy. On reading this we are led to conclude that, though John Wesley anticipated much of the so-called new theology, certainly he did not anticipate the "new education." Next after Kingswood schools comes the *Bristol School*. The Broadmead Chapel, which still exists (1903), is the very first Wesley built. It was begun six weeks after the Kingswood School had been projected. The Foundry, London, was leased before the Bristol chapel was finished. It is called "The New Room in the Horse Fair," and later, "The Old Room." It

The Real John Wesley.

was designed for a school as well as a place of worship, and was called "The New School in the Horse Fair," and appointed a place where Wesley's books might be bought. This name appears with Wesley's edition of "Pilgrim's Progress," published in Newcastle, and sold on Tyne Bridge, Newcastle, Holborn, the Foundry, "and at the New School in the Horse Fair, Bristol," 1743.

Worship seems to have predominated over schoolteaching in Bristol, as we find but very few references to school work there. The Horse Fair was the first entrance to the building. Later the Broadmead entrance was made, which alone is now used by worshipers.

In 1744 the school at the Foundry, London, was opened. Its first teacher was the adventurous Silas Told, who published "The Life and Adventures of Silas Told." Silas Told was an ex-sailor. His sailor visit to Boston, Mass., is curious and interesting reading. He was one of Wesley's converts at the Foundry. Wesley chose him for the first Foundry schoolteacher. Wesley induced him to leave a good situation to teach his school. Hear his own story of his beginning the work:

John Wesley, Educator.

“The day after I was established in the Foundry School, and in the space of a few weeks collected threescore boys and six girls, but the society, being poor, could not grant me more than ten shillings per week. This, however, was sufficient for me, as they boarded and clothed my daughter.” (He was then a widower.) “Having the children under my care from five in the morning until five in the evening, both winter and summer, sparing no pains, with the assistance of an usher and four monitors, I brought near forty of them into writing and arithmetic. I continued in the school seven years and three months, and discharged two hundred and seventy-five boys, most of whom were fit for any trade.”

He took the children each morning to the five-o'clock preaching; school hours were from six till twelve, and from one to five o'clock. No holidays were given. It was at this same school in 1773 that Matthews, one of Silas Told's successors, hanged himself. When the Foundry was vacated for the new chapel in City Road, a house near by, No. 27 Providence Row, near Finsbury Square, was taken for the school. “In 1785 Wesley preached in City

The Real John Wesley.

Road to the children at 5 A. M. They filled the morning chapel, and heard a sermon on education. As late as 1808 it was known as the Methodist Charity-school, belonging to the New Chapel, City Road." "Thus, for sixty-four years at least, Wesley's London school did good work for poor children. This was ragged-school work before 'ragged schools' were thought of. There were two masters, and about sixty children, a few of whom paid for their tuition; but the greater part, being extremely poor, were taught and even clothed gratuitously."

In 1746, two years later than the Foundry school was the *Newcastle-on-Tyne* chapel and school, known as "The Orphan House of Wesley." Among the trusts of this building was, "No. 3, that a school should be taught on the said premises, consisting of forty poor children, to be selected by Wesley and his brother during their respective lives, and, after their death, by the trustees."

On visiting Newcastle we found the old building had been demolished, and on its site was a flourishing Wesleyan day-school. In

John Wesley, Educator.

Wesley's day it became more of a preaching-place and dwelling-house for preachers and their families than a schoolhouse. The Rev. Dr. James H. Rigg, the greatest living Wesleyan educator, was born in the old building. His father was one of the resident preachers.

These four centers of evangelism, Kingswood, Bristol, London, and Newcastle, were also centers of education for the people. Of these, Kingswood alone remains unto this day. It is now a front-rank, secondary school. It also fits some to take degrees at London University. Its location has been at Bath since 1851. The part that Wesleyans are taking in popular education in England, by their elementary school system, under government patronage and partial support, is great. Their normal schools, the great Leys School, at Cambridge, and their theological colleges, besides secondary schools not wholly under their control—all these are, of course, later in origin than Wesley's day, of which alone we now speak. English Wesleyans to-day have no college authorized to grant degrees, though they fit some men to take them on examination.

The Real John Wesley.

"The Minutes of Conference for 1788 has this: Q. 14. What children are sent to the Raynham School? A. Joseph Harper."

What, or where this school of Wesley was, we can not learn, as this is the only mention of it we can find.

It must not be forgotten that the earliest Sunday-schools of which Wesley at once took hold, were largely for proper day-school work, and this down to times still remembered by aged people in England, some of whom therein learned to read, write, and cypher.

These facts, gathered from many sources, and here collated, suffice to show that John Wesley was not only an eminent evangelist, but also one of the greatest educators of his time. The salvation which he preached included deliverance from ignorance. The love of God which he urged the people to attain unto, included loving God with the mind.

CHAPTER VI.

John Wesley, Anticipator.

JOHN WESLEY, about a century and a half ago, anticipated many of the intellectual and social movements, as well as most of the religious activities, that mark this opening twentieth century. In matters of Biblical criticism, which are now prominently before us, John Wesley was an anticipator; for instance, in the revision of the sacred Scriptures. The British Wesleyan Conference, which is the mother Conference of Methodism, has recently favored the use of the Revised Version, though it has not commanded its use. We think that John Wesley would have ordered its use in all his chapels almost as soon as it came off the press. We think so because, feeling the need of it, he revised the New Testament. With the aid of Bengel, he gave the world a new version. In Wesley's version there are no less than one hundred and

The Real John Wesley.

thirty cases, in the first seven chapters of Matthew, where Wesley's changes agree with those of the revisers of 1881.

How was he on the Higher Criticism? Let us examine and see. In the preface to his Notes on the New Testament he states his position thus: "What the Son of God preached, and the Holy Ghost spake by the apostles, the apostles and evangelists wrote. . . . The Scripture, therefore, of the Old and New Testaments is a most solid and precious system of Divine truth. Every part thereof is worthy of God. And all together are one entire body, wherein is no defect, no excess. It is the fountain of heavenly wisdom, which they who are able to taste prefer to all writings of men, however wise or learned, or holy." (Preface to first edition, 1755, p. 5.) This will suit the most conservative of his present followers.

What has he to say to us on the errancy of the Scriptures? Let us together read from this same volume, on page 4, where he comments on the first verse of the New Testament. On Matthew i, 1, he writes: "If there were any difficulties in this genealogy or that

John Wesley, Anticipator.

given by St. Luke, which could not easily be removed, they would rather affect the Jewish tables than the credit of the evangelists; *for they acted only as historians, setting down these genealogies as they stood in those public and allowed records.* Therefore they were to take them as they found them. Nor was it needful that they should correct the mistakes, if there were any; for these accounts sufficiently answer the end for which they are recited. They unquestionably prove the grand point in view that Jesus was of the family from which the promised Seed was to come. *And they had more weight with the Jews for this purpose than if alterations had been made by inspiration itself. For such alterations would have occasioned endless disputes between them and the disciples of our Lord.*" The italics are ours. Thus, in his first comment on the first verse of the New Testament he admits the errancy of the Holy Scriptures, and this away back in January, 1754. What would some "frightened Isaacs," who are almost John Wesley worshipers, say if they should ever chance to read his Notes carefully, and be keen enough to see that he admits

The Real John Wesley.

that the evangelists may have been mistaken and been misled by existing documents, and that even the errors of the inspired evangelists may have given their writings more weight with their Jewish readers, because inspiration did not immediately rectify their errors? We wonder that this admission has not been made more of by devout and diligent Methodist scholars who are laboring to give the world the real mind of the Spirit of God, unclouded by human errors. For ourself, we have long since placed John Wesley among the highest critics.

That John Wesley did not regard all parts of the Bible as equally important and useful in all the ages of the world's history, and in all stages of human progress, is clearly seen by reading his introduction to "The Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America, With Other Occasional Services. London: Printed in the Year MDCCLXXXIV."

This is an abridgment of "The Book of Common Prayer," made by John Wesley and sent over with Dr. Thomas Coke, whom he had ordained "superintendent," or bishop, and whom he had authorized to organize the scat-

John Wesley, Anticipator.

tered Methodists into "The Methodist Episcopal Church in America."

In the "Introduction" he commends the use of the liturgy. He then speaks of four alterations he had made in this edition. The fourth of these is:

"4. Many Psalms [are] left out, and many parts of the others, as being *highly improper for the mouths of a Christian congregation.*

JOHN WESLEY."

Who is John Wesley that he should dare thus to speak of some portions of the sacred Scriptures as "being highly improper for the mouths of a Christian congregation?" Must he not have been one of the finical æsthetics of those times, a purist, or much worse, a higher critic of those days? Did he not, by those omissions, and by such a characterization, incur the woe contained in Rev. xxii, 19? Is not such a statement bald rationalism? We think not, but regard him as a most devout student of the Word of God, who, having the very mind of Christ, by which he learned the mind of the Holy Spirit, the author of the Holy Scriptures, was able to discriminate be-

The Real John Wesley.

tween the important and the comparatively unimportant, between the milk for Old Testament babes, and the strong meat for New Testament Christians. He could reverently and devoutly eliminate, from even the precious book of Psalms, statements and figures of speech, and a spirit which the people of God had long ago, by God's grace, outgrown. By such statements he saved himself the time and labor of attempting to justify the imprecations found in the Psalms, the use of which would cause Christians to lose the true Christian spirit. By this course he also omitted references to human physiology which, however true and helpful for private reading, are not well adapted for promiscuous and public utterances.

We think that, were he living among us to-day, and we were still using his version of the Psalms, he would make for us a still closer version, with omissions, even though it would expose him to grave charges, and unkindly and often ignorant criticisms from his brother ministers. He was a devout seer, and had the honesty and courage to tell what he saw.

John Wesley, on the dates of the historical books of the Old Testament—Joshua to Esther,

John Wesley, Anticipator.

inclusive—seems to anticipate the conclusions of recent critics as to a late date.

Introductory to his "Notes on Joshua," he writes of the twelve historical books: "It seems the substance of the several histories was written under Divine direction, when the events had just happened, and *long after* [the italics are ours] put into the form wherein they stand now, perhaps all by the same hand." ("John Wesley's Notes on the Old Testament," Vol. I, p. 701.)

Did John Wesley anticipate the modern theory of evolution, in its Christian form? Did he? Turn to his work, seldom found, and less seldom referred to—John Wesley's "Compendium of Natural Philosophy," etc. In the fourth volume, edition of 1784, at page 90, he says, under the chapter on "A General View of the Gradual Progression of Beings:" "Of all animals that are known to us, the polypus is one whose structure seems to be the most simple and to come nearest to that of plants." On page 101 we read: "The ostrich with the feet of a goat which rather runs than flies, seems to be another link which unites birds to quadrupends." Thus he gradually moves

The Real John Wesley.

up from plants to polypus, and from birds to quadrupeds. Now listen to this arch-heretic of the eighteenth century on page 102, under "By what Degrees does Nature Raise Herself up to Man?" He says: "How will she rectify this head that is always inclined toward earth? How change these paws into flexible arms? What method will she make use of to transform these crooked feet into supple and skillful hands? Or how will she widen and extend this contracted stomach? In what manner will she place the breasts and give them a roundness suitable to them? The ape is this rough draft of man, this rude sketch, an imperfect representation which nevertheless bears a resemblance to him, and is the last creature that serves to display the admirable progression of the works of God." Please read just once more. This time on page 109: "Such is man in the highest degree of earthly perfection. But mankind have their gradations as well as the other productions of our globe. *There is a prodigious number of continued links between the most perfect man and the ape.*" Would Mivart, Darwin, and Herbert Spencer have said amen to this?

John Wesley, Anticipator.

The fact is, John Wesley always kept an open mind. His teachableness is too often overlooked. He was not the autocratic ego-tist some have thought him to have been. He did not insist on having his own way in everything. Neither did he thrust his *ipse dixit* upon his people. Nearly all the peculiarities of Methodism he learned from others. "Religious societies" he did not originate, but imitated. Field preaching, lay preaching, the class-meeting, the love-feast, the weekly contribution, he got from others. Even his missionary ideas and methods he learned from his father. It was so with reference to all learning as well as work—he kept an open mind. He was teachable. His ideas of episcopacy he learned from Lord Peter King, nearly forty years before he put them into practice. In his day the "natural scientists were at swords' points upon what are now considered fixed principles. Absolute confusion existed. The astronomers were contradicting one another. Wesley for years believed that all the planets were inhabited. When further light came, he gave up that belief." When asked why he did not give up a certain belief, he said: "Yes,

The Real John Wesley.

as soon as any of these facts appear ; till then I neither espouse nor give up. But I still look upon it as ingenious, and as probable as any other." He then adds golden words of advice to the editor of the *London Magazine*, to whom he is replying: "Before I conclude," he says, "permit me, sir, to give you one piece of advice. Be not so positive ; especially in regard to things which are neither easy nor necessary to be determined. I ground this advice on my own experience. When I was young I was sure of everything ; in a few years, having been mistaken a thousand times, I was not half so sure of most things as I was before ; at present I am hardly sure of anything but what God has revealed to man." (Works, Vol. XIII, p. 376.) The date of this writing is 1765. John Wesley was then sixty-two years of age. Such a real scientist as John Wesley would not be found thrusting his hypotheses upon the people as though they were facts. Such an open mind as he kept was sure to increase in real knowledge. Such teachableness was sure to be rewarded with true learning. We think that in all established facts of science and philosophy, if he were alive

John Wesley, Anticipator.

to-day, John Wesley would head the procession. We also think he would greatly encourage all working hypotheses in searching after truth of all kinds. Yes, he was a man with an open mind. He did not permit his mind to shell over, not even in his old age. From both of God's great books, the written and the unwritten words, he was constantly expecting new light to break forth.

That "American of the Americans," Dr. Edward Everett Hale, has recently called attention to the "Pilgrim Covenant of Scrooby, 1602." It is found in that precious document, "Bradford's History," now safely secured in Boston from Old England. On securing a copy of the Covenant of Scrooby, 1602, a while ago, we went home and pasted beside it Wesley's covenant of Nottingham, July 13, 1788. The Pilgrim's reads: "These people, as y^e Lord's free people, joynd themselves [by a covenant of the Lord] into a church estate, in y^e fellowship of y^e gospell, to walk in all his wayes, made known or to be made known unto them, according to their best endeavours, whatsoever it should cost them, the Lord assisting them. And that it cost them something

The Real John Wesley.

this ensewing historie will declare." Simple, broad, deep, and wide, we thought the Pilgrim Covenant to be. Wesley's is like unto it, in all these respects. He says: "They [the Methodists] do not impose, in order to their admission, any opinions whatever. Let them hold Particular or General Redemption, Absolute or Conditional Decrees; let them be Churchmen or Dissenters, Presbyterians or Independents—it is no obstacle. Let them choose one mode of worship or another, it is no bar to their admission. The Presbyterian may be a Presbyterian still, the Independent or Anabaptist use his own mode of worship; so may the Quaker, and none will contend with him about it. They think and let think." "They" are the Methodists under John Wesley's personal leadership.

John Wesley's teachableness and tolerance have, we think, been too greatly overlooked and too poorly imitated by too many of his followers. He was the teachable, tolerant anticipator of the eighteenth century. To his anticipation of most of the measures and methods of modern Christian Socialism we must devote our next chapter.

CHAPTER VII.

John Wesley, Christian Socialist.

SOCIALISM and Christian socialism are not one. The former assumes that human society is wrong, and that the whole social order needs readjustment; but, while it proposes methods for righting matters between man and man, it has nothing to say concerning the relations between man and his God. Christian socialism agrees that human society is wrongly adjusted, that the right relations of man to man are not regarded, and that in many cases they are not understood. But it also aims to bring men into right relations to God, their Father, through Jesus Christ the Savior, and to use the pattern of Christ's life and the principles he taught in the readjustment of the social order. Socialism is sometimes called "scientific socialism" to distinguish it from Christian socialism, as though the latter is unscientific—a claim that all do not admit, be-

The Real John Wesley.

cause the Gospel, which is the weapon in the hand of the Christian socialist, is itself the science of character and right conduct even more than it is a way of escape from the doom of wrongdoing.

The leaders in Christian socialism have been, as they ought to have been, Christian ministers, such as Charles Kingsley, Frederick D. Maurice, and Frederick W. Robertson. We also find Thomas Hughes, Ruskin, and Arthur Dennison among the lay leaders in England, where this movement began. These men undertook to bridge over the great gulf which yawned between the Church and the people, dogma and duty, preaching and practicing, theoretical and applied Christianity. They believed that the Gospel is the panacea for all the individual ills of men and for all the moral maladies of society. Their work was that of going about to do good to the bodies, minds, and homes of men, so that all the interests of humanity may be redeemed from wrong and wrongdoers. The results of their work remain until this day. The inspiration they imparted to the Church and to society in general is too great to be tabulated. As

John Wesley, Christian Socialist.

one has written, they regarded "the world as the subject of redemption."

But John Wesley anticipated very many of the aims and methods of the modern Christian socialists. Scarcely second to, but rather as a part of his great evangelistic movement was his work as a Christian socialist. More than one hundred years before Maurice, Kingsley, and Robertson among the clergy, and Thomas Hughes, Ruskin, and Arthur Denny among the laity had existed the "Holy Club" at Oxford. Their principles were those that most, if not all, modern Christian socialists would adopt, and are found in the "Introductory Letter" that precedes Wesley's *Journal*, as follows:

"I. Whether it does not concern all men of all conditions to imitate Him, as much as they can, who 'went about doing good?'"

"Whether all Christians are not concerned in that command, 'While we have time let us do good to all men?'"

"Whether we shall not be more happy hereafter, the more good we do now?"

"Whether we can be happy at all hereafter, unless we have, according to our power, 'fed

The Real John Wesley.

the hungry, clothed the naked, visited those that are sick and in prison ;' and made all these actions subservient to a higher purpose, even the saving of souls from death ?

"Whether it be not our bounden duty always to remember that He did more for us than we can do for him, who assures us, 'In as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me?'

"II. Whether upon these considerations, we may not try to do good to our acquaintance? Particularly, whether we may not try to convince them of the necessity of being Christians?

"Whether of the consequent necessity of being scholars?

"Whether of the necessity of method and industry, in order to either learning or virtue?

"Whether we may not try to persuade them to confirm and increase their industry, by communicating as often as they can?

"Whether we may not mention to them the authors whom we conceive to have wrote the best on those subjects?

"Whether we may not assist them, as we

John Wesley, Christian Socialist.

are able, from time to time, to form resolutions upon what they read in those authors, and to execute them with steadiness and perseverance?

“III. Whether, upon the considerations above mentioned, we may not try to do good to those that are hungry, naked, or sick? In particular, whether, if we know any necessitous family, we may not give them a little food, clothes, or physic, as they want?

“Whether we may not give them, if they can read, a Bible, Common Prayer Book, or Whole Duty of Man?

“Whether we may not, now and then, inquire how they have used them; explain what they do not understand, and enforce what they do?

“Whether we may not enforce upon them, more especially, the necessity of private prayer, and of frequenting the church and sacrament?

“Whether we may not contribute, what little we are able, toward having their children clothed and taught to read?

“Whether we may not take care that they be taught their catechism, and short prayers for morning and evening?

The Real John Wesley.

“IV. Lastly, whether, upon the considerations above mentioned, we may not try to do good to those that are in prison? In particular, whether we may not release such well-disposed persons as remain in prison for small sums?

“Whether we may not lend smaller sums to those that are of any trade, that they may procure themselves tools and materials to work with?

“Whether we may not give to them who appear to want it most, a little money or clothes, or physic?

“Whether we may not supply as many as are serious enough to read, with a Bible, and Whole Duty of Man?

“Whether we may not, as we have opportunity, explain and enforce these upon them, especially with respect to public and private prayer and the blessed sacrament?”

The date of this writing is December 1, 1730, more than a hundred years before the Christian socialists, Maurice, Kingsley, and Robertson, began their work. But how exactly the aims of the two societies correspond!

John Wesley, Christian Socialist.

The same Holy Spirit animates the minds and hearts of both sets of men.

Christian socialism interests itself in the education of the poor. "Free and assisted education for the children" of the needy is its modern watchword. But this, as we have seen, was in the program of the Holy Club. John Wesley was especially devoted to this object. His very first educational work was the founding of a school in Oxford. He paid the mistress and clothed some, if not all, the scholars. It was ragged-school work before ragged-schools were thought of. In Kingswood, before Methodism had even a site for a chapel, the stone for the school for the children of the poor colliers was consecrated by Whitefield and passed over to Wesley to build upon. He did so, and thus began the work of Methodist education. Although this school, or its successor, eventually became an institution for the sons of Methodist preachers, yet Wesley never ceased his well-begun work for the education of the masses. His school at the Foundry, under Silas Told, was one of the very first of its kind. Furthermore, he dem-

The Real John Wesley.

ocratized learning by writing, editing, and publishing at what seemed ridiculously low prices text-books and standard reading for the poor. His grammars, logic, histories of England and of the Church, together with his great Christian Library, form part of the four hundred and fifty-three different publications which he issued for the education of the people. Dean Farrar says, "The vast spread of religious instruction by weekly periodicals and the cheap press, with all its stupendous consequences, were inaugurated by him." This same broad-minded dean says: "The British and Foreign Bible Society, the Religious Tract Society, the London Missionary Society, even the Church Missionary Society owe not a little to his initiative. . . . He gave a great impulse to both national education and to technical education." In initiating an American Methodist college at the first Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, our fathers only followed their leader, who interpreted God's command to love him with all the mind as one to be obeyed. Wesley was no believer in the dogma that "ignorance is the mother of devotion," while his motto for Kingswood

John Wesley, Christian Socialist.

School is still good for any school or scholar, "For the Glory of God, the Service of His Church, and of the State."

Christian socialists of to-day work for the emancipation of the white slaves of the factories and sweatshops. John Wesley had not to meet these conditions. There were no great factory problems in his day. But African slavery existed, and into that evil this social reformer thrust his sword up to the very hilt. What cared he if "Lady Huntingdon trafficked in human nature and George Whitefield held slaves?" He roused himself in behalf of the poor, trampled bondsmen, denouncing slavery in general as "the sum of all villainies," and American slavery in particular as "the vilest that ever saw the sun." His very last letter was written to that other Christian socialist, who did not know he was one, William Wilberforce, encouraging him in his parliamentary work for the emancipation of slaves. Miss Braddon, in her recently published book, "The Infidel," represents Wesley as silently approving of Whitefield's purchase of more slaves, because he did not then and there protest against slavery. But, having received more

The Real John Wesley.

light on Wesley's attitude toward the abomination, she promises to remove the passage from further editions of the book.

The twin evil of slavery was and is drunkenness. Like some other early temperance reformers, Wesley was not himself a teetotaler. He used wine and beer in moderation; but ardent spirits, the distillers, the venders, and the drinkers thereof as a beverage he most ardently denounced. Some of the strongest utterances against drunkards and drunkard-makers came from his tongue and pen. The swearer is preached to, and is then pressed with a special tract, as is also the smuggler. How much the British Government saved by his little tract, "A Word to a Smuggler," it would be impossible to tell. He preached and wrote against the evils of his day. He also expelled from his societies those who would not heed his warnings and desist from such wrongdoing. The briber and the bribe-receiver also shared the same fate. "Show me thy faith by thy works," was his motto. He sought to make men good citizens of earth, as the very best preparation for citizenship in heaven.

John Wesley, Christian Socialist.

Christian socialism undertakes the task of showing the rich their duties and privileges toward the poor. Unlike scientific socialism it does not believe in the equalization of capital, but it does believe in its moralization. Wesley spoke out on this subject as boldly, perhaps, as any man of his day. He has also written on this subject. His sermons on "The Use of Money," "The Good Steward," and the "Reformation of Manners," are good socialistic tracts for these modern times. We wonder Christian socialists do not often refer to them. Wesley first spoke and then wrote burning words on the wrong use of money, and illustrated his sermons by his own daily life of caring for the poor. The rules of the Holy Club, as we have seen, show its members to have all been Christian socialists in this very important respect. From his student days, when he even parted with the pictures from his walls, until an old man eighty-eight years of age, we see Wesley tramping London streets in the melting snow, begging money for the poor, and, like his Master, going about doing good. During his life he gave away more than \$200,000.

The Real John Wesley.

His methods of helping the poor were such, one hundred and sixty years ago, as we now follow. We boast that we have learned to help them without pauperizing them; the "Associated Charities" has taught us this. Wesley's plan was to relieve immediately present necessity, then at once help the poor to help themselves. He knew that to give a hungry man a loaf of bread only, would be to cause him to look to him for another when that was eaten. He rather gave him an inspiration, and also an opportunity for getting another loaf for himself by honest toil. For those who lack employment the good Christian socialist opens a bureau, to which the "out-of-work" may come and find employment. John Wesley did more than this. He made his chapels, not only bureaus, but workshops. Thus he gave the poor man who was out of employment a chance to help himself. On Tuesday, November 25, 1740, he writes in his "Journal:"

"After several methods proposed for employing those who were out of business, we determined to make a trial of one which several of our brethren recommended to us. Our

John Wesley, Christian Socialist.

aim was, with as little expenses as possible, to keep them at once from want and idleness; in order to which we took twelve of the poorest and a teacher into the society-room, where they were employed for four months, till spring came on, in carding and spinning of cotton. And the design answered. They were employed and maintained with very little more than the product of their own labor."

Thus for four months the place of worship was also the place of work. Carding, spinning, and praying were done in the same auditorium. This was not considered a desecration of the house of prayer. Frequently the naves of old churches and cathedrals were used as market-places on stormy days. The chancel only was kept for sacred uses, but business was done within sight of the altar, instead of in sight of the cross in the market-place. Six months later new needs called for new methods. On Thursday, May 7, 1741, Wesley writes:

"I reminded the United Society that many of our brethren and sisters had not needful food, many were destitute of convenient clothing, many were out of business and that with-

The Real John Wesley.

out their own fault, and many sick and ready to perish; that I had done what in me lay to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to employ the poor, and to visit the sick; but was not alone sufficient for these things, and therefore desired all whose hearts were as my heart:

1. To bring what clothes each could spare, to be distributed among those that wanted most.
2. To give weekly a penny, or what they could afford, for the relief of the poor and sick.

My design, I told them, is to employ for the present all the women who were out of business, and desire it, in knitting. To these we will first give the common price for that work they do, and then add according as they need. Twelve persons are appointed to inspect these, and to visit and provide things needful for the sick. Each of these is to visit all the sick within their district every other day, and meet on Tuesday evening to give an account of what they have done and consult what can be done further."

The Wesleyan idea of labor and the laborer may be learned from Charles Wesley's hymns for the workingman. He sent him about his daily toil singing the high praises of his God.

John Wesley, Christian Socialist.

For his waking and rising, on a workday, the following words were adopted:

“Are there not in the laborer’s day
Twelve hours, in which he safely may
His calling’s work pursue?
Though sin and Satan still are near,
Nor sin nor Satan can I fear,
With Jesus in my view.

.
Ten thousand snares my path beset,
Yet will I, Lord, the work complete,
Which thou to me hast given;
Regardless of the pains I feel,
Close by the gates of death and hell,
I urge my way to heaven.”

It is now time for the workman to don his coat and hat and kiss his wife and children good-bye. As he leaves his home for the place of toil, Wesley sets him singing to Christ the hymn entitled, in the present Methodist Hymnal, “Beginning the labors of the day:”

“Forth in thy name, O Lord, I go,
My daily labors to pursue;
Thee, only thee, resolved to know,
In all I think, or speak, or do.

The Real John Wesley.

Thee will I set at my right hand,
Whose eyes mine inmost substance see;
And labor on at thy command,
And offer all my works to thee.

Give me to bear thy easy yoke,
And every moment watch and pray;
And still to things eternal look,
And hasten to thy glorious day.

For thee delightfully employ
Whate'er thy bounteous grace hath given;
And run my course with even joy,
And closely walk with thee to heaven."

The man has now reached his work, and has "gotten on to his job," as he himself would say. Charles Wesley then sets him singing at his labor as follows:

"Summoned my labor to renew,
And glad to act my part,
Lord, in thy name my work I do,
And with a single heart.

End of my every action thou,
In all things thee I see:
Accept my hallowed labor now,
I do it unto thee.

Whate'er the Father views as thine,
He views with gracious eyes;
Jesus, this mean oblation join
To thy great sacrifice.

John Wesley, Christian Socialist.

Stamped with an infinite desert,
My work he then shall own;
Well pleased with me, when mine thou art,
And I his favored son."

When the day's service is done and the workman stands looking at it, Wesley has him sing the following hymn for the consecration of his labor :

"Son of the carpenter, receive
This humble work of mine;
Worth to my meanest labor give,
By joining it to thine.

Careless through outward cares I go,
From all distraction free:
My hands are but engaged below,
My heart is still with thee.

O when wilt thou, my life, appear?
Then gladly will I cry,
'Tis done, the work thou gav'st me here,
'Tis finished, Lord,' and die."

This is a picture of the early Wesleyan laboring man. He has been taught to lift his toil, menial though it seem, up to that plane where he could do it as unto the Lord.

Wesley also fortified the employer with

The Real John Wesley.

hymns such as the following for the beginning of a new business day :

"I and my house will serve the Lord:
But first, obedient to his word
I must myself appear;
By actions, words, and tempers show
That I my heavenly Master know,
And serve with heart sincere.

I must the fair example set;
From those that on my pleasure wait
The stumbling-block remove;
Their duty by my life explain,
And still in all my works maintain
The dignity of love.

.

Lord, if thou didst the wish infuse,
A vessel fitted for thy use
Into thy hands receive:
Work in me both to will and do;
And show them how believers true,
And real Christians, live."

For him in the rush and whirl of business on the exchange or in the market-place, Wesley wrote :

"Lo! I come with joy to do
The Master's blessed will;
Him in outward works pursue,
And serve his pleasure still.

John Wesley, Christian Socialist.

Faithful to my Lord's commands,
I still would choose the better part,
Serve with careful Martha's hands,
And loving Mary's heart.

Thou, O Lord, my portion art,
Before I hence remove!
Now my treasure and my heart
Are all laid up above;
Far above all earthly things,
While yet my hands are here employed,
Sees my soul the King of kings,
And freely talks with God."

Is it to be wondered that such employers and employees both prospered? That such a spirit infused into the minds of capitalist and laborer gave dignity to toil? With this spirit the employer did not regard his operatives as "hands," but as souls. No wonder the Methodists have grown rich and are now able, on the other side of the Atlantic, to lay a million guineas on God's altar, and, on this side, two million eagles as a thank-offering for the blessings of the past century. The Wesleys made songs for the laborer and his employer, and cared not so much who made economic laws for them. They sought to Christianize both, knowing all else would soon right itself. How

The Real John Wesley.

strikingly these hymns contrast with the songs of socialists on labor and capital, employer and employee!*

John Wesley was also a physician. Multitudes of the poor were sick, and could not afford a doctor. There was probably not a free medical dispensary in all England when Wesley began his Christian socialistic work. In 1746 he solved the difficulty by what he calls a "desperate expedient," saying, "I will prepare and give them physic myself." For twenty-six years he had made anatomy and physic a diversion; at forty-three he takes up the study and practice of medicine, engaging an apothecary and a surgeon to assist him. In three months he had about three hundred patients and had used over forty pounds' worth of medicines. After three years' practice he did not know of one patient who had died on his hands. In 1747 he opened a free dispensary at the Foundry, in London, and four months later one in Bristol. Writing to Blackwell, the banker, January 26, 1747, he says that in the latter dispensary alone he has over two

*See "Chants of Socialists," by William Morris, London, 1885.

John Wesley, Christian Socialist.

hundred patients, the number increasing daily. A year later he writes :

“We have ever since had great reason to praise God for his continued blessing on this undertaking. Many lives have been saved, many sicknesses healed, much pain and want prevented or removed. Many heavy hearts have been made glad, many mourners comforted, and the visitors have found Him whom they serve a present reward for all their labor.”

For the poor and sick who could not come to him he provided visitors—first promiscuous, then organized. Forty-six of these divided London into twenty-three districts, and each sick person was visited by two of these, three times a week. The four rules for visitors were: “(1) Be plain and open in dealing with souls; (2) Be mild, tender, patient; (3) Be cleanly in all you do for the sick; (4) Be not nice.” Three years later, in 1777, the Willow Walk Society, near Moorfields, but, more generally and properly speaking, the United Society for Visiting and Relieving the Sick, was organized. This was superseded by the Strangers’ Friend Society, for which Wesley drew up rules about a year before he died.

The Real John Wesley.

He says of it, "So this is also one of the fruits of Methodism." Royalty patronized it for years. In 1868 there were made 32,460 visits by its three hundred and fifty volunteer workers. It is still doing Christlike labor among all sorts and conditions of the poor and sick, irrespective of denomination or nationality. This was a part of John Wesley's Mercy and Help Department, and this year celebrates its one hundred and twenty-sixth anniversary. For those who could not come to him and for general domestic use he wrote "Primitive Physick," a book whose first edition was issued on June 11, 1747, and which went through twenty-seven editions in England, the last one coming out in 1850. In his works Wesley also published Dr. Tissot's "Advices with Respect to Health." He was up to date in his treatment of disease. For instance, on November 16, 1747, having heard of the electrical machines, he went to see them in use. On February 17, 1753, he studied Dr. Franklin's "Letters on Electricity," and on February 4, 1768, he read Dr. Priestley's "ingenious book on electricity." Like a true Christian socialist, in short, he believed in and worked for the

John Wesley, Christian Socialist.

redemption of the bodies of men from disease, as well as their souls from sin. Twenty-four of the thirty-four recorded miracles of Jesus were wrought upon the sick, and Wesley was a true disciple of the Great Physician.

For widows and orphans Wesley also made provision. Fifteen sick widows were housed at the Foundry, eating at the same table as did Wesley and his preachers. The third chapel he built, at Newcastle-on-Tyne, was called "The Orphan House of Wesley." His first chapel was also designed to be a home for orphans. It still stands, the very first of all the Methodist churches, in Broadmead, Bristol, fifteen minutes' walk from the orphan homes of the late George Müller. One year before he died, Wesley also founded in Dublin an almshouse for aged Methodists, which is still prospering.

Wesley also acted as banker for the poor. About the middle of 1746 he saw that some needy men could be started in business for themselves if they had a little capital. He set to work and begged £30 16s. to begin with. In a year and a half no less than two hundred and fifty-five persons had been helped. Only

The Real John Wesley.

one pound at a time would he lend, and it was to be paid back weekly within three months. This scheme pleased all sorts of wise people, even an eminent Deist sending him a guinea toward this fund. It is said that many a successful London tradesman was started in business in this way. In Bristol, Wesley started a Provident Society, a kind of savings bank for the poor. Some Bristolians did not like this, and ridiculed him. A gorgeously-colored picture was issued representing Wesley pouring out sacks of gold, and, while his followers were storing away the coin, the powers of darkness were dragging Wesley away, but not to the higher regions. This was his solution of the capital and labor question. He helped the laborer to become a capitalist by his Provident Society, and the capitalist to aid the laborer by his loan fund. Thus he brought together capitalist and laborer, anticipating savings banks and lending clubs for the poor.

From these facts we conclude that the earliest Methodism was truly of Christian socialistic spirit. This is recognized by such writers as Canon Moore Ede, who, in his Hulsean Lecture, affirms, "The man who did the most

John Wesley, Christian Socialist.

to reform the social life of England in the last century was John Wesley." His earliest followers took up the work of elevating the masses socially, as well as spiritually. But, with the opening of the nineteenth century, Wesley being no longer with his organization the Methodists as a people began to slide back from the advanced position they had taken in social matters. Through nearly the whole of the century we have been emphasizing the evangelistic, at the expense of the socialistic, work for which we were partly raised up. For a couple of decades past, on both sides of the Atlantic, we have been trying to return to our former work and to regain our former position. The great forward movements of Manchester, London, Birmingham, and other centers in England, as also in New York, Chicago, and other American centers; the deaconess movement; homes for the children and aged; Methodist hospitals and institutional churches are all attempts to return to our great commission of saving the bodies, minds, and daily lives of the people, for the redemption of whose souls Christ has died. The Salvation Army has been wiser than we. The careful student

The Real John Wesley.

of its work from the beginning will feel that, for some years past, simply as an evangelistic agency, it has been a declining force. That noble son of Wesley, General Booth, at once saw that something must be done. The novel and startling methods of calling attention to the need of the salvation of the soul would no longer attract. Old circus buildings, theaters, jam factories, skating rinks, stables, and such places which once were packed to suffocation, and which once rang with hallelujahs, were now well-nigh deserted. The congregations had dwindled from thousands to scores at most. Then General Booth added Christian socialism to glowing evangelism. He began to care for the bodies, houses, minds, families, and all the other interests of men. He struck boldly out for the redemption of the whole man, not only from sin, but from all its present, as well as its future, consequences. He began to fight dirt and debt, as well as drink and other doings of the devil. "In Darkest England and the Way Out" was his slogan, which reached the ears and opened the pockets of philanthropists in all English-speaking lands. The Army put on

John Wesley, Christian Socialist.

new life, with its new activities. We incline to think that, but for this socialistic new departure, it would now be a thing of the past.

The sooner Methodism imitates the socialistic departure of the Salvation Army, at least in the underlying principles, the sooner shall we be found in the old paths. Had Methodism lived up to her high calling and privileges and never have narrowed down to almost exclusively evangelistic and family Church work, there would have been no need of the Young Men's Christian Association, nor of many of the fraternal orders and mutual benefit societies which attract men and too often absorb their attention, to the neglect of the Church, and, worst of all, to the neglect of Christ's great salvation. When a man is won from his cups and cards he needs a place to go to and friends to meet of the other kind, or his very loneliness may drive him back to his former life. The coffee-house, with its well-lighted reading-room and refreshments at a little above cost and its company of good people, will soon place him where he can stand alone, and will then put him where he can help others. It is not enough to

The Real John Wesley.

get him converted ; his environment must also be changed. His work only begins when he has repented and believed to the saving of his soul. His body, his social nature, and his home must also be benefited. In certain parts of Ireland, in John Wesley's days, the Methodist homes could be distinguished by their outside appearance. The windows and doorsteps were clean, and the walks in front of them were swept. Clean hearts were followed by clean houses. Wesley is credited with the saying that "cleanliness is next to godliness," but we rather think that he regarded it as a part of godliness.

The method of this great Christian socialist was philosophical and Scriptural. He sought to reform society by first securing the regeneration of the individual. His method was from center to circumference, and not from circumference to center. His idea was that the very best way to change a man's environment is to change his moral condition. Christianize him, and his social life will be Christianized. Wesley understood that the new kingdom to be established on the earth is to be made up of a new hu-

John Wesley, Christian Socialist.

manity, and that Christ through his gospel is now making all things new. He combined the zealously evangelistic with the decidedly Christian socialistic, the one a complement of the other. Were he with us to-day we think he would say, "Go ye and do likewise."

CHAPTER VIII.

John Wesley—A Great Giver.

“THE system of redemption is, from first to last, one prodigious process of giving. God loved the world and gave his only begotten Son. The Son loved us, and gave himself to death for us all. This giving does not rest at the point of bounty, but passes to that of inconceivable sacrifice. Every man on whose spirit the true light of redemption breaks, finds himself heir to a heritage of givings which began on the eve of time, and will keep pace with the course of eternity. To giving he owes his all; in giving he sees the most substantial evidence he can offer that he is a grateful debtor. The self-sacrifice of Him in whom he trusts says, far more touchingly than words could say, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’ ”

Thus spoke William Arthur, in his great address on “Proportionate Giving,” delivered

John Wesley—A Great Giver.

in New York in 1855. This great Wesleyan not only understood the genius of the gospel of Jesus, he also was a follower of the Christlike John Wesley, who first gave himself unto God, and then gave all he possessed unto the people. Wesley was a very great giver. He gave his time, his toil, and his talents, including the money committed to his care, all to the work to which God had called him. Like General Booth and Dwight L. Moody, he was falsely charged with making money to enrich himself. Like them he scarcely stopped to vindicate himself from the charge. He knew that God would bring forth his "righteousness as the light," whilst he, like his Master, "went about doing good."

The poor were special objects of Wesley's care. May we not find a reason for this, not only in the Scriptures with which he was familiar, but in his own early experience? He was born into a home of poverty. If ever the feelings of the rich and the fortunes of the poor met, it was in the Epworth Rectory. The whole life of the rector, from his graduation from Oxford until its close, was one hand-to-hand and death

The Real John Wesley.

struggle with grim poverty. John somewhat escaped this when at school and college ; but at college, until he obtained his fellowship he had to live from hand to mouth, and not seldom was seriously embarrassed from lack of means. During a part of this time it is evident that he was improvident and suffered unnecessarily. His own early struggles, and those he knew of at Epworth, were doubtless so overruled that they became means of fitting him to sympathize with the poor and needy. Some great men have seemed not to know the value of money. It is said that Daniel Webster and Henry Ward Beecher were of this class. Their minds were occupied with what they deemed to be greater things. Wesley knew the value of money. At the opening of Oldham Street Chapel, in Manchester, England, on the site of which stands the great Central Hall of the Manchester and Salford Wesleyan Mission, the greatest mission of Methodism, and one of the greatest in the world to-day,—“When Mr. Wesley went to open Oldham Street Chapel, as he sat in the vestry, all the dons came about him and began to talk about the ways and means. ‘Well, well, brethren,’ said Mr. Wesley, ‘if the work pros-

John Wesley—A Great Giver.

pers, you 'll have money enough.' 'Ah, sir,' was the reply, 'we know you never knew the value of money.' Mr. Wesley took no notice, but bit his lips, and let them talk on. But during the sermon he recollected it, and began at once to speak of it. 'I have heard to-day,' said he, 'that I do not know the value of money. What! Do n't I know that twelve pence make a shilling, and twenty-one shillings a guinea? Do n't I know that if given to God it is worth heaven—through Christ—and if hoarded and kept, it's worth damnation to the man who hoards it.' " His two sermons, on "The Use of Money" and "The Good Steward," show his practical knowledge of Christian finance. In them he says: "Above all, He has committed to our charge that precious talent which contains all the rest—money. It is unspeakably precious if we are wise and faithful stewards of it." "It may be eyes to the blind, feet to the lame, yea, a lifter-up from the gates of death." "Gain all you can; save all you can; give all you can," was his advice to his followers. His practice ran parallel with his preaching. He once said that if he died worth ten pounds, independent of his

The Real John Wesley.

books, he would give the world leave to call him a thief and a robber. This was his solemn intention. He seems to have gone a little beyond this, unawares, for he left behind him his chaise and horses, besides, as one has said, "a good library of books, a well-worn clergyman's gown, a much-abused reputation, and—the Methodist Church." When a student at Oxford, one cold winter's day, he took from his walls pictures, sold them, and gave the money to a poor girl of the school which he was helping to support, for her to buy herself needful food and clothing.

His income there was thirty pounds a year. He lived on twenty-eight pounds and gave two pounds away. Though his income quadrupled in four years, yet he used only twenty-eight pounds on himself, and gave away ninety-two pounds.

In 1780 he wrote: "Two-and-forty years ago, having a desire to furnish poor people with cheaper, shorter, and plainer books than any I had seen, I wrote many small tracts, generally a penny apiece; and afterwards several larger. Some of these had such a sale as I never thought of; and, by this means, I un-

John Wesley—A Great Giver.

awares became rich. But I never desired or endeavored after it. And now that it is come upon me unawares, I lay up no treasures upon earth; I lay up nothing at all. My desire and endeavor, in this respect, is to 'wind my bottom round the year.' I can not help leaving my books behind me whenever God calls me hence; but in every other respect, my own hands will be my executors." (Works, Vol. XIII, p. 9.) His reply to the commissioner of excise is well-known:

"Sir,—I have two silver spoons here in London and two at Bristol. This is all the plate which I have at present, and I shall not buy any more while so many round me want bread. I am, Sir, your most humble servant,
"John Wesley."

He sometimes earned money unexpectedly. On one occasion, when in London, while dining with a friend in the neighborhood of Blackfriars, he was requested by an eminent artist to allow a cast of his face to be taken, the gentleman offering him as a remuneration ten guineas (a guinea a minute) for the time occupied in the operation. "O," said Mr. Wesley,

The Real John Wesley.

"I do not want anything of the kind ; pray keep your money, and urge me no further." "Sir," returned the artist, "I will not detain you more than two or three minutes ; do allow me to take the cast." "Well, then," replied Mr. Wesley, "if you can do it in the time you mention, I will submit." Accordingly he lay down, and the artist succeeded in obtaining the likeness he so much desired ; and then prevailed upon Mr. Wesley to accept the ten guineas. Soon afterwards, accompanied by Mr. Broadbent, Mr. Wesley proceeded towards the borough, when his attention was attracted towards a crowd of people surrounding an auctioneer, and there was apparently some tumult. He requested Mr. Broadbent to inquire into the cause of this excitement ; and it was speedily ascertained that the goods of a poor debtor were about to be sold. "What is the meaning of that shout ?" said Mr. Wesley. The words caught his ear, "Turn him off ! turn him off !" With some difficulty it was ascertained that the poor man was in dying circumstances, and that the inhuman creditor was determined to have the bed on which he was suffering. Mr. Wesley now rushed into the throng ; and, seizing the auc-

John Wesley—A Great Giver.

tioner's arm, exclaimed, "How much do you want? What is the debt?" "Ten guineas, Sir," was the immediate answer. "Here it is; take it, take it, and let the poor man have his furniture again," was Mr. Wesley's joyful reply. Then turning to his companion he said, "Now, Brother Broadbent, I see why God sent me those ten guineas."

Telford states that: "In 1782 he spent £5 19s. on his clothes, gave away £356 himself, and £237 13s. through his book steward. In 1783 the amount expended was £832 1s. 6d.; in 1784, £534 17s. 6d.; in 1785, £831 12s.; in 1786, £738 5s.; in 1787 (including traveling expenses), £961 4s.; in 1788, £738 4s.; in 1789, £766, and traveling expenses, £60. Even this statement does not fully represent the case. Samuel Bradburn said that, between the Conference of 1780 and that of the following year, Wesley distributed more than £1,400 in private charities. He told Bradburn in 1787 that he never gave away less than £1,000 a year." (Life of John Wesley, p. 331.) He not only kept daily and hourly journals of his goings and doings, but also a close and accurate cash account until within a year of his death, when

The Real John Wesley.

he wrote with a very trembling hand, in words almost indecipherable:

“N. B. For upwards of eighty-six (which should be sixty-eight) years, I have kept my accounts exactly. I will not attempt it any longer, being satisfied with the continual conviction that I save all I can, and give all I can; that is, all I have. John Wesley.

“July 16, 1790.”

His physician, friend, and biographer, Dr. Whitehead, says: “It was supposed that, in the course of fifty years, Wesley gave away between twenty and thirty thousand pounds.” Henry Moore, his biographer, says: “Mr. Wesley’s accounts lie before me, and his expenses are noted with the greatest exactness. Every penny is recorded: and I am persuaded, the supposed £30,000 might be increased several thousands more.” He was a grateful giver as well as a great giver. Bradburn says: “He never relieved poor people in the street, but he either took off, or removed his hat to them, when they thanked him.”

That he always gave wisely, his greatest admirers could not claim. His brother Charles

John Wesley—A Great Giver.

said he "was born for the benefit of knaves." He once set Charles to watch for them. He claims for himself that he was deceived less often than was Charles, though he always saw more good than evil in men. Henry Moore began to travel in 1779; he continued in circuit work until 1833, and died in 1844. He lived with John Wesley who dearly loved him, and appointed him one of his three legatees (so often wrongly called trustees). He also became his biographer. In the last year of Moore's itinerancy a young preacher named George Osborn, resided with him. That young preacher became the nestor of British Methodism, Dr. George Osborn. He died in 1891, at the good old age of eighty-three years. His most valuable collection of "Wesleyana" and 'Methodistica' is now enshrined in the library of Drew Theological Seminary, which holds perhaps the best collection in the world. Young Osborn, during his year under Henry Moore's roof, used to try to get Moore to write out, or to dictate, his personal memories of John Wesley. He could not succeed, but he himself made notes of Moore's table talk, which he never published, but which were found

The Real John Wesley.

among his papers after his decease in 1891. The following extract will give us a realistic sketch of John Wesley as a great giver :

“On one occasion Mr. Moore said to his young colleague [Osborn] : ‘Thank God, we have everything necessary, and a little more. It was not always so. I remember when I first came to London, and had not a second coat, nor could I procure another. We had a tailor among the local preachers, and I wore his coat while he turned mine. And at that time I was living in Mr. Wesley’s house as his assistant. He used to say sometimes, “Henry, you do n’t treat me like a friend ; you never tell me of any thing you want.” “Indeed, sir,” I said, “I ’d be loath to rob the poor box.” I knew he gave away all he had. My wife, I remember, once had great difficulty in persuading him to have some new stockings, and at last bought them herself, and got the money afterwards from the stewards ; and yet he sometimes gave away twenty or thirty pounds in a day. He was beset with beggars. They knew his times of leaving London and returning as well as he did. He had English and foreign, gentle and simple, all kinds of degrees. He never sent

John Wesley—A Great Giver.

any empty away except once, on a Sunday morning, when going to preach at City Road, after the local preachers had breakfasted at his house. [A constant custom on Sunday morning: they often received their appointments for the day at the breakfast table.] Tommy Tennant went with him across the chapel yard, which was full of beggars. He had no money, and as they crowded round him, elbowed them away. "What," said he, "am I to try to keep all the poor of the parish?" It was a frosty morning and he slipped and fell at full length on his back. "There, Tommy," said he, "I've got my payment! I ought to have given them good words, at least." 'At that time,' said Mr. Moore, 'we gave all the class money to the poor and had eight poor stewards for London [then all one circuit]. The sacrament was administered every Lord's-day morning by the clergymen who assisted Mr. Wesley, and that collection kept those at the chapel [City Road].'

In answer to young Osborn's question: "Then how were the preachers paid, Sir?" "Why, there was a table at the house, sir, where they might eat their fill; and the stewards gave them a stipend of three pounds per quarter."

The Real John Wesley.

"One day Mr. Wesley held a meeting at the Foundry of all the leaders, stewards, trustees, etc., to consult about providing bread and coals for the poor in winter, which was a favorite plan of his. One man who had ten thousand pounds said, 'Times are very bad.' Another, with six hundred pounds a year said, 'Money is very scarce.' So Mr. Wesley was disgusted, and came away into the house, saying, 'When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith in the earth?' As he was going up-stairs, Betty McDonald—a half-silly old woman who went singing about the house while doing her work, 'I love my Savior because I know my Savior loves me,' and other psalms of her own composing—called him down: 'Sir, I have something to say to you.' 'Well, Sister McDonald, what is it?' 'O, Sir, my sister's dead; I've just got word to-day.' 'Well, I hope she died in the Lord.' 'O, yes, Sir, no doubt of that; she lived to the Lord and now she's gone to him.' 'Well, give the Lord the glory, Sister McDonald,' and away he went. 'O, no, Sir, I've something more to say; you must not go yet.' 'What is that?' 'Why, Sir, she left me a hundred pounds.' 'Well, I'm glad to hear it;

John Wesley—A Great Giver.

what are you going to do with it?' 'Do with it? What should I want with a hundred pounds? I have enough. Here it is, Sir! Do you give it to the poor.' 'Ah, well,' said Mr. Wesley, 'I perceive there is some faith in the earth yet.' That poor woman, like her employer and pastor, was also a great giver.

CHAPTER IX.

John Wesley, Tolerator.

THE following extracts are from John Wesley's Journal:

"I then met the Society, and explained at large the rise and nature of Methodism; and still aver I never read or heard of, either in ancient or modern history, any other Church which builds on so broad a foundation as the Methodists do; which requires of its members no conformity either in opinions or modes of worship, but barely this one thing: to fear God and work righteousness."—*Journals, August 26, 1789, (at Redruth), Vol. IV, p. 450.*

"I PREACHED at eleven on the parable of the sower; at half-past two on Psalm 1, 23; and in the evening on, 'Now abideth faith, hope, love; these three.' I subjoined a short account of Methodism, particularly insisting on the cir-

John Wesley, Tolerator.

cumstances. There is no other religious society under heaven which requires nothing of men, in order to their admission into it, but a desire to save their souls. Look all around you. You can not be admitted into the Church, or society, of the Presbyterians, Anabaptists, Quakers, or any others, unless you hold the same opinions with them, and adhere to the same mode of worship. The Methodists alone do not insist on your holding this or that opinion; but they think, and let think! Neither do they impose any particular mode of worship; but you may continue to worship in your former manner, be it what it may. Now, I do not know any other religious society, either ancient or modern, wherein such liberty of conscience is now allowed, or has been allowed, since the age of the apostles. Here is our glorying; and a glorying peculiar to us. What society shares it with us?"—*Journals*, May 18, 1788, (*in Glasgow*), *Vol. IV*, p. 401.

JOHN WESLEY rose superior to the spirit of his times. His was an intolerant age. The so-called "Act of Toleration," which was about fourteen years old when he was born, was re-

The Real John Wesley.

garded by him about as it was by Lord Stanhope in anticipation, when he said, in a speech in the House of Lords, thirty-six years after John Wesley died: "The time was when toleration was craved by Dissenters as a boon; it is now demanded as a right; but the time will come when it will be spurned as an insult." Not toleration, but equality in matters of religion, was the political creed of our founder. Loyal Churchman as he was, would he not lead the Free Churches of England in their present-day strenuous efforts for equality? The concessions to Unitarians in 1813, to Roman Catholics in 1829, and to Jews in 1858, in England, would only whet his appetite for perfect equality of privilege and liberty of action among all the branches of the one Church of Jesus Christ. For illustration, read his two blazing letters to the Bishop of —, written just before he died, and beginning with: "I am a dying man, having already one foot in the grave. Humanly speaking, I can not long creep upon the earth, being now nearer ninety than eighty years of age. But I can not die in peace before I have discharged this office of Christian love to your lordship." Then follow stinging rebukes for

John Wesley, Tolerator.

the bishop's intolerance and persecutions, telling him that he "does this under color of a vile, execrable law, not a whit better than that concerning the burning of heretics. So persecution, which is banished out of France, is again countenanced in England!" (Works, Vol. XIII, p. 137). He speaks of the Conventicle Act as "that execrable Act." Such was the attitude of this dyed-in-the-wool Englishman and most loyal member of the Church of England towards the intolerant laws of his country and his Church.

His ever-increasing devotion to evangelical truth, after his evangelical conversion, we have never seen questioned by sane men. If he was not an evangelical of the evangelicals, was there ever one? Because he was evangelically broad, he again and again refused to become ecclesiastically narrow. He had seen the Greater Christ of the New Testament evangelists, therefore he was broadly tolerant. We wonder not that Dean Stanley claimed him as the founder of the modern Broad Church. He descended from High Churchism, went down to the lowest depths of the Low Church, and then came up into the Broad Church, bringing

The Real John Wesley.

with him all that was good from the other realms. If some who swear by him, and who are almost tempted to swear at others who know him better, would only get better acquainted with him by taking a trip with him through his journals, they would find themselves in company with such men as Augustine Birrell on the one side, and Hugh Price Hughes on the other, each with pencil in hand making notes along the way, and reveling in the real greatness of their guide. While such educators as Professor Denny, of Free Church College, Glasgow, are quoting from Wesley's Works more than from those of any other man, and Professor Moule, of Cambridge, is lecturing to his students on John Wesley's Journals, those wonderful records are not even on the reading lists of candidates for our ministry. British Methodists are advocating examinations in Wesley's Journals before ordination. A better acquaintance with our great founder is the specific for any form of intolerance in matters religious. Hear him speak of a good heathen of whom he has been reading: "I read to-day a part of the 'Meditations' of Marcus Antonius. What a strange Empe-

John Wesley, Tolerator.

ror! And what a strange heathen! Giving thanks to God for all the good things he enjoyed—in particular for his good inspiration, and for twice revealing to him in dreams things whereby he was cured of (otherwise) incurable distempers. I make no doubt but this is one of those ‘many’ who ‘shall come from the east and the west and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,’ while ‘the children of the kingdom,’ nominal Christians, are ‘shut out.’” (Journals, October 11, 1745.) That his preachers were with him, is seen by the Minutes of the Conference of 1770:

“1. Who of us is now accepted of God? He that now believes in Christ with a loving, obedient heart.

“2. But who among those who never heard of Christ? He that feareth God and worketh righteousness, according to the light he has.

“3. Is this the same with ‘he that is sincere?’ Nearly, if not quite.”

In sermon 106, “On Faith,” he cites the Mohammedan biographer of Hai Ebu Yokdan, saying, “The story seems to be feigned, but it contains all the principles of pure religion and undefiled.” In the same sermon his tol-

The Real John Wesley.

erance towards materialists, Deists, and Jews is seen in the closing sentence of that section of the sermon: "It is not our part to pass sentence upon them [Jews], but to leave them to their own Master."

How was he towards Roman Catholics? Let him tell: "The faith of the Roman Catholics, in general, seems to be above that of the ancient Jews. If most of these are volunteers in faith, believing more than God has revealed, it can not be denied that they believe all which God has revealed as necessary to salvation. In this we rejoice in their behalf. We are glad that none of those new Articles which they added, at the Council of Trent, 'to the faith once delivered to the saints,' does so materially contradict any of the ancient Articles as to render them of no effect." (Sermon 106.) In his Journal for November 5, 1780, he writes: "I preached at the new chapel [City Road, London] on Luke ix, 55: 'Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of,' and showed that, supposing the papists to be heretics, schismatics, wicked men, enemies to us, and to our Church and nation, yet we ought not to persecute, to kill, hurt, or grieve them,

John Wesley, Tolerator.

but barely prevent their doing hurt." Hear him on the founder of the Jesuits: "In riding from Evesham to Bristol, I read over that surprising book, 'The Life of Ignatius Loyola,' surely one of the greatest men that ever was engaged in the support of so bad a cause! I wonder any man should judge him to be an enthusiast; no, but he knew the people with whom he had to do; and setting out (like Count Z——) with a full persuasion that he might use guile to promote the glory of God, or (which he thought the same thing) the interest of his Church, he acted in all things consistent with his principles." (Journals, August 19, 1742.) After visiting a papist feeling after better light, in Savannah, May 27, 1737, among his reflections are: "2. That as bad a religion as popery is, no religion is still worse; a baptized infidel being always found, upon the trial, twofold worse than even a bigoted papist. 3. That as dangerous a state as a papist is in, with regard to eternity, a Deist is in a yet more dangerous state, if he be not, without repentance, an assured heir of damnation. And, lastly, that, as hard as it is to recover a papist, it is still harder to re-

The Real John Wesley.

cover an infidel ; I myself having known many papists, but never one Deist, reconverted." Among his publications we find several works by Roman Catholics, which he chose and edited for his people, also biographies of Catholic saints, such as Madame Guyon, the Marquis de Renty, the Spanish Gregory Lopez and others.

Charles Wesley wrote :

"The Unitarian fiend expel
And cast his doctrine down to hell."

But, remember, it was the Mohammedan he referred to, not the modern denomination which bears that name. John Wesley published a "Life of Thomas Firmin," a Unitarian. In it he says: "I was exceedingly struck at reading the following Life, having long settled it in my mind that the entertaining wrong notions concerning the Trinity was inconsistent with real piety. But I can not argue against matter of fact. I dare not deny that Mr. Firmin was a pious man, although his notions of the Trinity were quite erroneous." (Works, Vol. XIV, p. 279.) How different two of the great Johns of Church his-

John Wesley, Tolerator.

tory were—John Calvin and John Wesley! John Calvin was certainly involved in the burning of Servetus, if not its prime mover. John Wesley, diametrically opposed to John Calvin in doctrine, was also so in his intolerance towards those who did not agree with his dogmas of limitation of salvation.

We will now let Wesley speak for himself in this matter of Christian toleration: "O that all men would sit as loose to opinions as I do; that *they would think and let think.*" (Journal, December 3, 1776.) "I have no more right to object to a man because he holds an opinion different from mine than I have to separate from a man because he wears a wig while I wear none. But if he happen to take off his wig and shake the powder in my eyes, I shall consider it my duty to run away from him as soon as possible." (M. Lelievre's John Wesley, ed. 1900, p. 430.) In his "A Plain Account of the People Called Methodists," he says: "The thing which I was greatly afraid of all this time, and which I resolved to use every possible method of preventing, was a narrowness of spirit, a party zeal, a being straitened in our own bowels—

The Real John Wesley.

that miserable bigotry which makes many so unready to believe that there is any work of God but among themselves. I thought it might be a help against this, frequently to read, to all who were willing to hear, the accounts I received from time to time of the work which God is carrying on in the earth, both in our own and other countries, not among us alone, but among those of various opinions and denominations. For this I allotted one evening in every month, and I find no cause to repent my labor. It is generally a time of strong consolation to those who love God, and all mankind for his sake ; as well as of breaking down the partition-walls which either the craft of the devil or the folly of man has built up ; and of encouraging every child of God to say (O when shall it once be?) : 'Whosoever doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.' "

Thus did John Wesley write of the tolerant spirit :

"Do you show your love by your works? While you have time, as you have opportu-

John Wesley, Tolerator.

nity, do you in fact 'do good to all men,' neighbors or strangers, friends or enemies, good or bad? Do you do them all the good you can, endeavoring to supply all their wants, assisting them both in body and soul, to the uttermost of your power? If thou art thus minded—may every Christian say yea!—if thou art but sincerely desirous of it, and following on till thou attain, then 'thy heart is right, as my heart is with thy heart.'

"'If it be, give me thy hand.' I do not mean, 'Be of my opinion.' You need not; I do not expect or desire it. Neither do I mean, 'I will be of your opinion.' I can not; it does not depend on my choice; I can no more think than I can see or hear as I will. Keep you your opinion: I mine; and that as steadily as ever. You need not even endeavor to come over to me, or bring me over to you. I do not desire you to dispute those points, or to hear or speak one word concerning them. Let all opinions alone on one side and the other; only 'give me thine hand.' I do not mean 'embrace my modes of worship; or, I will embrace yours.' This, also, is a thing which does

The Real John Wesley.

not depend on your choice or mine. We must both act as each is fully persuaded in his own mind."

With such quotations before us, we wonder not at the words of a great modern thinker concerning John Wesley: "No reformer the world has ever seen so united faithfulness to the essential doctrines of revelation with charity towards men of every Church and creed." This being true, let us, as loyal Wesleyans, live up to one of the mottoes of our founder: "*We think and let think.*"

CHAPTER X.

John Wesley as a Preacher for the Present Time.

IN the very rare "Memoirs of the late Rev. John Wesley, A. M.," by John Hampson, A. B., who had been one of his preachers, and knew him well, we find this pen-portrait of the great little man:

"The figure of Mr. Wesley was remarkable. His stature was of the lowest, his habit of body in every period of life the reverse of corpulent, and expressive of strict temperance, and continual exercise; and, notwithstanding his small size, his step was firm, and his appearance, till within a few years of his death, vigorous and muscular. His face, for an old man, was one of the finest we have seen. A clear, smooth forehead, an aquiline nose, an eye the brightest and the most piercing that can be conceived, and a freshness of

The Real John Wesley.

complexion, scarcely ever to be found at his years, and impressive of the most perfect health, conspired to render him a venerable and interesting figure. Few have seen him without being struck with his appearance; and many, who had been greatly prejudiced against him, have been known to change their opinion the moment they were introduced into his presence. In his countenance and demeanor there was a cheerfulness mingled with gravity; a sprightliness which was the natural result of an unusual flow of spirits, and was yet accompanied with every mark of the most serene tranquillity. His aspect, particularly in profile, had a strong character of acuteness and penetration.

“In dress he was a pattern of neatness and simplicity. A narrow, plaited stock, a coat with a small upright collar, no buckles at the knees, no silk or velvet in any part of his apparel, and a head as white as snow, gave an idea of something primitive and apostolical; while an air of neatness and cleanliness was diffused over his whole person.” (Vol. III, p. 166.)

In the Tussaud collection of wax figures

As a Preacher for the Present Time.

in London, Hampson's pen-portrait seems to have materialized. The clothing upon the figure is said to have been worn by Wesley. The first impression one receives on standing before it is, What a little man to have cut such a great figure into the centuries! Truly bigness and real greatness are not synonymous.

John Wesley was, first of all, a great man. It would be difficult to find more true manliness packed into one hundred and twenty-two pounds avoirdupois than we find in him. He was a great Christian, a great philanthropist, a greater organizer, a great writer a great traveler; but it is as a great preacher he now appeals to us. Our knowledge of him as a preacher must be gained from his one hundred and forty printed sermons extant, personal references to his preaching in his journals and letters, and the survived testimonies of actual hearers.

While his printed sermons give us the matter of his preaching, yet they poorly reveal the actual preacher. They were written for the press, and usually in times of enforced leisure. They are brief theological and experimental

The Real John Wesley.

treatises for his preachers and thoughtful hearers, rather than reports of sermons actually preached. Many of them were written in his later ministry, which differed greatly from his early preaching in matter, in manner, and in effects produced. His Journals and Letters should be read in connection with his sermons. They are unlike F. W. Robertson's "Life, Letters, and Sermons," when read chronologically, in which we find his sermons to be the outgrowths of present experiences. Wesley wrote his sermons for the press. Robertson's sermons were pressed out of him by current experiences, and were uttered without thought of printer's ink. While no preacher can be seen on the printed page, this is especially true of John Wesley. The Journals, which are just now being resurrected and read as never before, show us the preacher at his work. The scattered testimonies of hearers give us the preacher from other viewpoints. From a careful study of these sources we conclude that he was not only a preacher for the eighteenth, but also for the twentieth century. All the qualities of a preacher for the present time are found in John Wesley.

As a Preacher for the Present Time.

He had, as we have seen, a sound body. A good physical basis is needed by a present-time preacher as never before. His was also a sound mind. His splendid mental inheritance was supplemented by the most liberal education of his day. Few men of his century were better equipped with natural and acquired abilities to preach than was he. He also had the wisdom so to apply himself as to make his abilities availabilities. He traded with his talents and gained others besides them. That he was "in diligence not slothful" is seen in that he preached from eight hundred to a thousand times a year for fifty-two years, during which time he traveled two hundred and fifty thousand miles, or almost five thousand miles each year, and that mostly on horseback.

"The man behind the gun" is a popular phrase just now. The man behind each of John Wesley's sermons was such a man as is needed behind each present-time sermon. He was a preacher with *deep and strong convictions*. He was no theorizer or temporizer. He never talked to fill out the allotted time, with even good speech. His preached utterances always had in them the accent of conviction.

The Real John Wesley.

"I believe, therefore I speak," punctuated his sermons. The present-day preachers of useful renown are men deeply convicted of the things they preach. Hearers admire such men, even when they believe not all they say. Unbelievers who heard John Wesley never doubted that he himself believed what he preached. The convicted preacher is he whose preaching results in convicted hearers. A modest positiveness in the pulpit, like that of John Wesley, is a need of present-time preaching in many places.

The *Christlike disinterestedness* of this great preacher was such as would qualify him for all times. He sought not the plaudits of his hearers, nor their purses. A personal following he had, and that a very large one, but it was wholly unsought. His constant attempts to hold his people to the National Church prove the utter absence of desire to be himself at the head of a great division of the "one army of the living God." He would have been perfectly contented to land all his people safely into the Church of England, and that his own name should be forgotten. He sought to make followers of Jesus, and not simply

As a Preacher for the Present Time.

followers of Wesley. Almost any preacher of to-day, if he has average shrewdness and suavity, can secure a personal following, and often a lucrative support; but woe is to the man who dare set himself in the place which belongs to his Master. If ever a preacher since Paul's day, went before a people, saying in spirit and practice, "I seek not yours, but you," John Wesley did. See him in the pulpit, as seen by Hampson:

"His attitude in the pulpit was graceful and easy; his action calm and natural, yet pleasing and expressive; his voice not loud, but clear and manly; his style neat, simple, perspicuous, and admirably adapted to the capacity of his hearers.

His simple style showed the singleness of his aim. Henry Moore, his biographer, on first hearing him, "thought it strange that a man who spoke with such simplicity should have made so much noise in the world." His model was St. John's Epistle. He attained his unscholastic style by reading an elaborate sermon to a maid-servant. She had to tell him when he read something she could not understand. Betty's "Stop sir!" came often; and as often

The Real John Wesley.

he wrote a simple word or phrase over the hard one, until the common people heard that sermon gladly. The disinterested scholar appears in his preface to the first four volumes of his sermons, which he began to issue in 1746:

“Nothing here appears in elaborate, elegant, or oratorical dress. If it had been my design to write thus, my leisure would not permit. But, in truth, I at present designed nothing less; for I now write (as I generally speak) *ad populum*; to the bulk of mankind, to those who neither relish nor understand the art of speaking, but who, notwithstanding, are competent judges of those truths which are necessary to present and future happiness. I mention this that curious readers may spare themselves the labor of seeking for what they will not find. I design plain truth for plain people. Therefore of set purpose I abstain from all nice and philosophical speculations, from all perplexed and intricate reasonings, and, as far as possible, from even the show of learning, unless in sometimes citing the original Scriptures. I labor to avoid all words which are not easy to be understood, all which

As a Preacher for the Present Time.

are not used in common life; and, in particular, those kinds of technical terms that so frequently occur in bodies of divinity, those modes of speaking which men of reading are intimately acquainted with, but which to common people are an unknown tongue. Yet I am not assured that I do not sometimes slide into them unawares. It is so extremely natural to imagine that a word which is familiar to ourselves is so to all the world."

Henry Ward Beecher's advice to young preachers was, to put the jackscrews under the sills if you wish to lift the house; under the roof, if you wish only to lift the top-heads in the congregation. Wesley put his levers under the whole audiences to which he preached. Instead of wondering eyes and gaping mouths he was rewarded with hearts opened to receive the word preached in simplicity and in power.

✓ John Wesley's preaching was *decidedly evangelistic* enough for the present time. He dwelt first of all, and chief of all, upon the saving truths of Christianity. He did not slur the elementary truths of the gospel. Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ; the absolute necessity of regen-

The Real John Wesley.

eration by the Holy Spirit; the promised justification of the penitent and believing sinner; the witness of the Spirit to that justification, and the duty and privilege of sanctification by the Spirit; the glorious heaven for the good, and the awful hell for the finally impenitent,—these great truths were everywhere and always emphasized. But pardon, holiness, and heaven were not the only truths he preached. He insisted on an evangelical life. He compassed the whole gamut of gospel truth. His three sermons on the family, his series of thirteen on the Sermon on the Mount, his sermon on love, as enjoined in I Corinthians, thirteenth chapter, and his sermons on Christian perfection, which, he taught, is loving God with all the heart and one's neighbor as one's self, may serve to indicate the practical gospel that he preached. A glance at the titles and texts of his one hundred and forty printed sermons will show the breadth of his teaching. The gospel he preached was more of a program for the life that now is than a means of escape from doom in the life that is to come. "Show me thy faith by thy works," and "He that doeth righteousness is righteous," seemed

As a Preacher for the Present Time

to be ever in his thoughts when preaching to believers, just as was, "Turn ye, O turn ye, for why will ye die?" when preaching to sinners.

John Wesley's six sermons on riches contain much present-time truth. They are No. 8 in the series on the "Sermon on the Mount," on the "Mammon of Unrighteousness;" No. 50, on "The Use of Money;" 51, on "The Good Steward;" 87, "The Danger of Riches;" 108, "On Riches;" and No. 126, "On the Danger of Increasing Riches." The last of these was one of the last he wrote. It is his swansong on this practical subject. Its date is September 21, 1790. He died March 2, 1791. The place where he wrote it was Bristol, that seaport of wealth and great commercial prosperity, also the scene of his earliest evangelistic efforts and successes. In these days of millionaires and multimillionaires, days of uprising of labor against capital, the pulpit is called upon to teach the rich their duties and responsibilities to God and to the poor. The one place where the rich and the poor may meet together is in the house of the Lord. Wesley felt himself called to bridge over the

The Real John Wesley.

great chasm which separated the classes from the masses. This he did by tongue and pen, in preaching the claims of the poor upon the rich, and the duties of the rich to honor those claims. He cried aloud and spared not. These sermons are full of wholesome and timely teaching for to-day.

The success of a present-day preacher depends largely upon his good judgment in selecting texts and themes suited to the occasion. Wesley, like his Master, always suited his teaching to the spiritual needs and mental aptitudes of his hearers. In striving to reach the masses he did not offer as a bait "sermons funny and short." "It is n't real church, is it?" asked a little girl recently in a Methodist church, where lightness and merry-making seemed to have been introduced in order to avoid dullness. Wesley's services were always decorous and reverential. Stonemason John Nelson, who heard him at the Foundry, said: "This man can tell the secrets of my heart, but he hath not left me there; he hath showed me the remedy, even the blood of Christ. Then was my soul filled with consolation, through hope that God, for Christ's

As a Preacher for the Present Time.

sake, would save me." Such preaching not only was blessed to his conversion, but helped to make Nelson the mighty preacher and helper of Wesley, which he soon became.

In preaching to the most degraded, he always chose the tenderest texts and themes. We once visited Newcastle-on-Tyne, where he began his ministry in the north of England, and which he made one of his three centers. We went down to the slum quarters and stood by the old pump, where he preached his first sermon. He says of the people: "Such blasphemy, such cursing, such swearing, even from the mouths of little children. Surely this place is ripe for the Master." His text to them was: "He was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities." His tenderness was such that those poor and wicked people clung to his hands and his clothes when he had finished. Later we were in aristocratic Clifton, Bristol. In his Journal for May 20, 1739, we find this entry on his preaching there: "Seeing many of the rich at Clifton Church my heart was much pained for them, and I was earnestly desirous that some, even of them, might 'enter the kingdom of heaven.' But,

The Real John Wesley.

full as I was, I knew not where to begin in warning them to flee from the wrath to come, till my Testament opened on these words: 'I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance;' in applying which my soul was so enlarged that methought I could have cried out (in another sense than poor, vain Archimedes), "Give me where to stand and I will shake the earth!" Once he was reproved for preaching to a respectable congregation from, "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" Wesley said, had I been preaching in Billingsgate I would have taken, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

He was quick to utilize current events for spiritual profit. The earthquake of 1750 called forth a sermon on "The Cause and Cure of Earthquakes," which solemnly impressed great multitudes. The tolling of a bell led him to change his subject to, "It is appointed unto men once to die." He had the homiletic habit of interpreting the voices of God to the people. In the timeliness and adaptation of his

As a Preacher for the Present Time.

themes he would be a great success in the present day.

We have not dwelt upon his deep and abiding spirituality. The highest spiritual work must be done by those who themselves "mind the things of the Spirit." That John Wesley lived and moved and had his spiritual being in the immediate presence of God need not be restated. He was not a mere advocate of the gospel, but a Holy Ghost witness to the truth; therefore his ministry was "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power." In his early ministry most remarkable physical demonstrations resulted from his preaching. These largely ceased as the years rolled by, but spiritual results attended his ministry to the last. In his early ministry he often preached long sermons. Sometimes he preached two and even three hours, though he urged his preachers to be short.

Unfortunately the most of the descriptions of his preaching extant are by those who heard him in his old age. From these we learn that he was uneven. Frequently his sermons showed lack of proper preparation. How

The Real John Wesley.

could it be otherwise with a man who preached two or three times each day of the week, and sometimes five times on Sunday; who wrote or edited four hundred and fifty-three different publications, and traveled on an average of about five thousand miles a year, mostly on horseback? During his evangelistic ministry of fifty-two years he preached about forty thousand six hundred times, and traveled about two hundred and fifty thousand miles. No mortal could be profound and eloquent on each of such numerous occasions. His sermons were utterly devoid of stories or pictorial paragraphs, such as Whitefield reveled in. His personal applications were pointed and pungent. "Sinner indeed!" cried out one of his Epworth hearers as he looked into the man's eye and applied the truth to his heart.

Thackeray in "The Four Georges" gives a good description of this preacher. Two rarely-seen poetic descriptions of John Wesley as a preacher, both of those who heard him, may fittingly close this brief study. The first is by one of his most prominent helpers, his associate in City Road Chapel, and one of those

As a Preacher for the Present Time.

clergymen who assisted him in his first ordinations, which were for America—the Rev. James Creighton. In his elegy he pictures him preaching to the colliers at Kingswood :

“How oft have I heard him with tears in his eyes,
Exhorting the hardened to turn;
Beseeching from nature's dull sleep to arise,
And live for the end they were born!
And when he stood forth in the valley of bones,
How soon did an army start up!
What shaking was seen, and what piteous groans
Were heard in the shuddering group!
The tiger was changed, and became like a child,
The lion was meek as a lamb,
The drunkard was sober, the savage was mild,
And sang our Immanuel's name.
The colliers of Kingswood, behold how they stare
And rise from the horrible pit!
How blackened their faces, how grisly their hair,
As round in a circle they sit!
And now, while they listen and eagerly gaze,
Their tears in a rivulet roll;
They gape, and amazement appears in their face
Astonished to hear they 've a soul.
But when they are told that the Savior hath died,
And they might be saved by the same,
With joy in their eye they most heartily cried,
Hosanna to Jesus' name!”

The Real John Wesley.

The other description is by Cowper. It gives us the preacher from another viewpoint as he,

“Who, when occasion justified its use,
Had wit as bright as ready to produce;
Could fetch from records of an earlier age,
Or from Philosophy’s enlightened page,
His rich materials, and regale your ear
With strains it was a privilege to hear.
Yet, above all, his luxury supreme,
And his chief glory was the Gospel theme:
There he was copious as old Greece or Rome,
His happy eloquence seemed there at home;
Ambitious not to shine or to excel,
But to treat justly what he loved so well.”

CHAPTER XI.

John Wesley's Preaching and Hints to Preachers.

MUCH has been written about John Wesley's preaching from fifteen to twenty times a week for about fifty years, and his having preached in all about forty thousand times. It is matter of record that in the year 1765, when he was sixty-two years of age, he preached about eight hundred times. From his contemporaries we gather a few realistic sketches of this great preacher. Would that some one had sketched his first sermons, preached at Leigh, near Oxford, in 1725. This being denied, let us step into the vestry of All-hallows Church, Lombard Street, London, where he preached his first extempore sermon. Hung upon the vestry-wall, we find his own account of it in these words:

"On Sunday, December 28, 1788, two sermons were preached in the parish church for

The Real John Wesley.

the benefit of forty-eight poor children belonging to the St. Ethelburga Society; that in the morning by the Rev. George Patrick, LL. B., and that in the afternoon by the Rev. John Wesley, M. A., from the words in the service, 'His commandments are not grievous.' The congregation was very large. While Mr. Wesley, then in his eighty-sixth year, was putting on his gown in the vestry, he said to Mr. Thomas Letts, a steward of the charity: 'It is above fifty years, sir, since I first preached in this church. I remember it from a particular circumstance. I came without a sermon, and going up the pulpit-stairs I hesitated and returned into the vestry under much mental confusion and agitation. A woman who stood by noticed my concern, and said, Pray, sir, what is the matter? I replied, I have not brought a sermon with me. Putting her hand on my shoulder she said, Is that all? Can not you trust God for a sermon? The question had such an effect upon me that I ascended the pulpit, preached extempore with great freedom to myself and acceptance to the people, and have never since taken a written sermon into the pulpit.' "

His Preaching, and Hints to Preachers.

The reason for Mr. Wesley's surprise on this occasion may be found in his private journal at about the date of this sermon, in 1788. It is there stated: "I preached in this church at the earnest request of the Church wardens to a numerous congregation, who came, like me, with the intent to hear Dr. Hynlyn. This was the first time that, having no notes about me, I preached extempore." This was the beginning of his preaching without notes which was his general custom ever afterward. It was then a novel method, and attracted great attention. But for special occasions he carefully wrote his sermons, spending days in their preparation. Under date of Monday, February 27, 1758, he writes: "Having a sermon to write against the assizes at Bedford, I retired for a few days to Lewisham. Friday, March 3d, I returned to London."

This great sermon, on "The Great Assize," shows that it was no "offhand" production, even by a great man. It is No. XV. This is only one instance of recorded days of preparation of special sermons by the pen-method. When he did not write he always carefully arranged the matter of his sermons, as seen by

The Real John Wesley.

his note on Matt. v, 9, where, in commenting on the Sermon on the Mount, he says: "Through this whole discourse we can not but observe the most exact method which can possibly be conceived. Every paragraph, every sentence is closely connected both with that which precedes and that which follows it. And is not this the pattern for every Christian preacher? If any there are able to follow it, without any premeditation, well; if not, let them not dare to preach without it. No rhapsody, no incoherency, whether the things spoken be true or false, comes of the Spirit of Christ."

Thus he sounds the death-knell of tonguey but lazy preachers who are not willing to undergo what is sometimes the drudgery of careful preparation. Even orthodoxy on the atonement would not excuse such. "I am sick and tired of hearing some men preach Christ," said he. What does he mean? Hear him again: "I find more profit in sermons on either good tempers or good works than in what are only called 'gospel sermons.' The term has become now a mere cant-word. I wish none of our society would use it. Let but a pert, self-suf-

His Preaching, and Hints to Preachers.

ficient animal, that hath neither sense nor grace, bawl out something about Christ or his blood, or justification by faith, and his hearers cry out, 'What a fine gospel sermon!' ”

It was said of one preacher: “Ten thousand are his texts, but all his sermons one.” Not so with Wesley. He compassed the whole gamut of Gospel truth, and urged his preachers to preach the whole gospel of Christ in the life, as well as Christ on the cross. He believed in and practiced ethical preaching. He would have no “preaching of Christ even ‘to the careless sinner,’ that is not ‘by reasoning of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come.’ ”

One would naturally think that, after his evangelical conversion, May 24, 1738, when his “heart was strangely warmed,” that then he would preach, at least for awhile, on nothing else; but, if you will take his journals and read from that date to 1741, you will find that during that time Wesley, while expounding large sections of Holy Scriptures, notably the Sermon on the Mount, and taking a fairly wide range of subjects in outdoor and church-preaching, had a few favorite texts which he

The Real John Wesley.

used over and over again. The greatest favorite of all—the text from which he preached again and again within the same area, sublimely regardless whether the people had heard the sermon or not—was this: “For God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.” That was his favorite sermon at this period. He says so. Sometimes he preached it at prodigious length. Once, he tells us, he was drawn out for three hours’ preaching from this text.

John Wesley in preaching never slurred unpopular truth, yet he never gave needless offense. He was faithful, but not brusk. His mind on this is seen incidentally in his comment on Mark iv, 33. “He spake the word as they were able to bear it”—“adapting it to the capacity of his hearers, and speaking as plain as he could without offending them. A rule never to be forgotten by those who instruct others.” In his note on Mark x, 34, he says on Jesus’ words which he renders: “Jesus saith to them, ‘children.’ See how he softens the harsh truth by the manner of delivering it! And yet without retracting or abating one tit-

His Preaching, and Hints to Preachers.

tle." Wesley did not lack courage to preach stern truths, but he always "truthed it in love."

Two other good hints to preachers occur incidentally in his notes on Luke xiv, 34, "Salt—every Christian, but more eminently every minister." On verse 21 he says: "The servant came and showed his Lord these things—so ministers ought to lay before the Lord in prayer, the obedience or disobedience of their hearers." This gives us Wesley's idea of "watching for souls as those who must give an account." It has been wisely written of his preaching:

"His sermons are noted for symmetry. He did not dwell on one class of gospel truths to the exclusion of others. A common fault in preachers is to choose one set of doctrines, or one line of religious thought, and adhere to it because of its peculiar fascinations, leaving their hearers to forget that there is another side to the gospel. These preachers of one idea or of a half gospel are wonderfully successful in certain communities, but singularly unsuccessful in others. The reason is that the particular truths required to awaken a certain

The Real John Wesley.

class of people are the very truths which they never present. Mr. Wesley scrupulously proclaimed both the law and the gospel, and diligently taught the preachers under his care to do the same thing. He was not a little annoyed by certain preachers who crept into the itinerancy and went about preaching the love of God exclusively. This they called 'gospel preaching,' and denounced others who insisted on the constant practice of moral duties and the danger of living in sin as 'legal preachers.' To one who had fallen into this error Mr. Wesley wrote: 'The law always prepares the way for the gospel. I scarce ever spoke more earnestly here of the love of God in Christ than I did last night, but it was after I had been tearing the unawakened to pieces. Go thou and do likewise.' Again and again he severely condemned the practice haranguing on the sufferings of Christ or salvation by faith without inculcating holiness.

"Taking men from the common walks of life and initiating them into the Christian ministry without special training, it could not be otherwise than that Mr. Wesley would find many of them sadly defective in knowledge and

His Preaching, and Hints to Preachers.

wisdom. To cure this evil he advises them to spend at least five hours each day in reading useful works. Some of his preachers said they read only the Bible. To this he makes a worthy answer: 'If so, you need preach no more. So said George Bell, and what is the fruit? Why, now he neither reads the Bible nor anything else. This is rank enthusiasm. If you need no book but the Bible, you are got above Paul. He wanted others, too.' 'These are wise words.'

In 1746 he arranged a course of study for his preachers. Dr. Doddridge aided him in this, which was the precursor of the present courses of study for Methodist preachers. There was no room for a drone in the Methodist hive in John Wesley's day. It was, "Study, or go back to your trade and preach with me no longer."

Let us now see John Wesley himself preaching. "Mr. Wesley's published sermons do exactly resemble his preaching. There is little or no difference," says Henry Moore, in his "Table Talk." Evidently he refers only to the matter of rhetoric and oratory, for he continues. "Hence people who came to hear a

The Real John Wesley.

fine oration were greatly disappointed. Mr. Whitefield was the man for them." In matter the later-printed sermons of Wesley may nearly correspond with his spoken utterances. Mr. Moore did not hear him in his earliest ministry among the masses. He further says:

"Mr. Wesley always preached during Conferences at the principal chapel every evening—the preachers in the morning. He [then] occupied an hour only in the whole service, and generally preached from forty to forty-five minutes. He was much shorter when he had no liberty. Hence he often concluded the whole service in three-quarters of an hour.

"There was no man in whose entire conduct, while in the pulpit, it was so evident that he cared nothing for any man, or any number of men. Sometimes when he had liberty his words literally struggled for utterance, and he poured them out with great rapidity and force, often stopping a moment to breathe out a most impressive prayer that the people might then and there believe, and leave an entrance to them.

"Charles Wesley was altogether different. He preached just as it happened. When not

His Preaching, and Hints to Preachers.

having liberty he strung texts together till his sermon was all Scripture. I have heard him preach thus by the hour, all being delivered with a peculiar intonation, a sort of singing. He leaned his arms on the book and kicked the back of the pulpit with his heels meanwhile. He never studied a sermon. I believe he had a conscientious scruple about it. One night Charles Wesley said to me: 'Now I knew that George Whitefield was waiting in Moorfields for my congregation from the Foundry; so I determined that, as he had turned Calvinist, he should not have them, and I kept them till nine o'clock. With my texts I could do that easily; but what would my brother have done with his first, second, and third, think you?'

"One of his preachers, Andrew Blair (1778-93) was very zealous, but a rough, noisy preacher. A friend once took a child to hear him, who afterward said, on being asked, that he did not like the preacher at all—he cursed and swore so! I heard Mr. Wesley tell this story once, when preaching at Conference from the text, 'If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God.' He said: 'No man can

The Real John Wesley.

be bullied into heaven, and never was. You would not like to be counted cursers and swearers.' ” How very different is all this from the ideas of Wesley and his preaching sometimes entertained! Henry Moore goes on to say:

“We had some preachers who preached like mice in a cheese. Mr. Wesley never liked to attack them directly, but when he came where any of them was he began to tell this story: ‘A man went to the justice of the peace to complain of his neighbor for having beaten, kicked, bruised him, and broken his head. He spoke in a soft, whining tone. The justice sent him away, declaring it was a story trumped up for the sake of malice. He repeated his statement, and was again ordered out. He then became animated, and exclaimed: ‘Is there no law in England? Do you sit there as justice of the peace to administer it, and see it broken?’ ‘Stop!’ said the justice. ‘I begin to think there may be something in it now. Stop. You talk now like a man who has had his head broken.’ ”

Thus we see through the eyes, and hear him through the ears, of Henry Moore, his constant friend, legatee, and biographer, who

His Preaching, and Hints to Preachers.

so often heard him, and who lived in his house.

Major Yoland, of the British Army, in extreme old age, told a Wesleyan preacher that when he was a child he heard John Wesley preach in his native town, Yarmouth: "The nurse took me into one of the front pews in the side gallery. I looked down into the pulpit, and was filled with childish wonder when I saw a man in black clothes stand behind the tottering form of the great little preacher, and support him with his arms while he preached a sermon which I was too young to understand. I have never lost the deep impression made upon me by my first and last sight of John Wesley."

The very next day the poet Crabbe heard him in Lowestoft, near Yarmouth, October 15, 1790. He heard him quote, in the fervor of a splendid zeal which the rush of numerous years could not quench, nor even abate, a few lines from the poet Anacreon, concluding with:

"'T is time to live, if I grow old!"

Of those who actually heard him preach, John Nelson, Howell Harris, Horace Walpole,

The Real John Wesley.

Thackeray, Sir Walter Scott, William Cowper, John Hampson, Jr., James Creighton, are among those who have left written descriptions of the preacher and of his preaching.

In Scotland his preaching does not seem to have been as acceptable as it was in England; and this not solely on account of his peculiar doctrines. Beattie once heard him preach at Aberdeen one of his ordinary sermons. He remarked that "it was not a masterly sermon, yet none but a master could have preached it." He himself writes: "Sunday, May 21, 1780, the rain hindered me from preaching at noon upon Castle Hill. In the evening the house was well filled, and I was enabled to speak strong words. But I am not a preacher for the people of Edinburgh. Hugh Saunderson and Michael Fenwick are more to their taste." This was also true of that great preacher, Charles Haddon Spurgeon, as he himself once confessed. Neither the Methodists nor the Baptists have succeeded as well in Scotland as in England. The present Methodist Forward Movement there seems to be the turning of the tide in "the land o' cakes."

Unlike his brother Charles, John Wesley

His Preaching, and Hints to Preachers.

carefully prepared his sermons. His method seems to have been largely the mental method without first writing them on paper. Being always at work reading and writing for the press, he was always full of preaching matter, which he was able to draw off on short notice. As he did not preach long to any one congregation, he continued using the same matter, though often in different connections. He said of himself that he could not preach long to one congregation: "I know were I to preach a whole year in one place, I should preach both myself and most of my congregation asleep." However, he had had experience in Wroote, August, 1727, to November, 1729, and in Georgia, February 5, 1736, to December 2, 1737, so that we think that thus saying he doubtless was severe on himself. Of course, he could not preach long to the same people, and also do the amount of reading, writing, and publishing which he also did. But had he given himself to this one thing, preaching, what a mighty sermonizer he would have been! We are glad he did not do so, but was a flaming evangelist, and was, as the greatest preacher of the last century, the Rev. F. W. Robertson,

The Real John Wesley.

puts it, never "under the treadmill necessity of being forever ready, twice a week, with earnest thoughts on solemn themes."

He held a severe "time limit" over his preachers. "While I live, itinerant preachers shall be itinerant; I mean if they choose to remain in connection with me," was one of his sayings. May 4, 1724, he writes: "In the evening I talked with the preachers and showed them the hurt it did both to them and the people, for any one preacher to stay six or eight weeks together in one place. . . . Whereas if he never stays more than a fortnight together in one place he may find matter enough, and the people will gladly hear him." This seems to us like itinerating "with a vengeance." The removal of the time-limit in the Methodist Episcopal Church is the other extreme. The question whether it is the best thing for the denomination and for the kingdom of God is not as yet demonstrated. Three General Conference periods will solve the problem. What were Wesley's ideas on preaching old sermons? He writes:

"Tuesday, September 1.—Went to River-ton. I was musing here on what I heard a

His Preaching, and Hints to Preachers.

good man say long since : ‘Once in seven years I burn all my sermons ; for it is a shame if I can not write better sermons now than I could seven years ago.’

“Whatever others can do, I really can not. I can not write a better sermon on the Good Steward than I did seven years ago ; I can not write a better on the Great Assize than I did twenty years ago ; I can not write a better on the Use of Money than I did thirty years ago ; nay, I know not that I can write a better on the Circumcision of the Heart than I did five and forty years ago. Perhaps, indeed, I may have read five or six hundred books more than I did then, and may know a little more history or natural philosophy than I did ; but I am not sensible that this has made any essential additions to my knowledge of Divinity. Forty years ago I knew and preached every Christian doctrine which I preach now.”

It is noticeable that the sermons he here refers to are those upon which he had spent the most time in careful preparation and had written out in full. Doubtless, he would agree with the saying that “mushroom sermons will

The Real John Wesley.

but seldom bear re preaching." Perhaps it was of a preacher of such sermons he wrote in 1788, "It is a burning shame for any preacher to spend a whole week in one place."

Should any reader of these pages desire to read more fully John Wesley on preaching, let him turn to his works and find his "Letters on Preaching," London, December 20, 1751: "Letters to Charles Wesley," November 4, 1722; to Rankin, November 18, 1765; to John King, and to Samuel Bardsley; also to Minutes of Conference, 1744-89, especially of August 1, 1745; also his "Directions Concerning Pronunciation and Gesture," full of up-to-date suggestions on the delivery of a sermon. Do professors of practical theology refer often to the valuable homiletical matter scattered throughout the works of John Wesley? If they do not, they deprive both themselves and the coming ministry of very much that would be of great practical value in the preaching of the Word, for John Wesley was a great preacher and helped to make many great preachers.

CHAPTER XII.

John Wesley and Politics.

JOHN WESLEY was a deeply-spiritual man. Other-worldliness was a strong element in his character. His citizenship was in heaven. He counted himself but a pilgrim and a stranger on the earth. His autobiographical hymn, entitled "The Pilgrim," No. 1078 in the Methodist Hymnal, and which begins with,

"How happy is the pilgrim's lot,
How free from every anxious thought," etc,—

this hymn, especially as it first appeared, with all its stanzas, shows how he related this life to the life to come. He regarded time as the shadow, and eternity as the substance. He held all things temporal, subordinate to things spiritual and eternal. But his spirituality was of the practical kind, which enabled him to lift up the so-called secular onto the plane of the spiritual. His other-worldliness did not lead

The Real John Wesley.

him to neglect his duties toward this world. He rightly understood Bible "citizenship" (Philippians iii, 20) to include close attention to all duties of earthly citizenship. He himself was a practical politician. To practical politics he urged his people, both by pen and voice. In the midst of some of his great revival work he took time to write, and opportunity to exhort, the Methodists to do their duty as citizens of this world. He worked for the redemption of society as well as that of the individual. He believed that a new social order, through the preaching and practicing of the gospel, was a part of the Divine plan for humanity.

His life, which nearly covered the eighteenth century (1703-1791), was lived in a political age. He lived under four British sovereigns, including Anne, the last of the Stuarts (1702-1714), and the first three Georges, who reigned from 1714 to 1820. The story of this strenuous century has been well told by Historians Green and Lecky. He had been in Charter-house school but six months when Queen Anne died (August 1, 1714). London then had a population of a half a million, and

John Wesley and Politics.

Bristol, with which Wesley's life was to be so closely linked, and which was then the second city in the realm, had a population of twenty-nine thousand. All England had about five and a half millions of people, less than the London of to-day. St. Paul's Cathedral, begun twenty-four years before Wesley was born, had been finished but four years when he first saw it in 1714. Of the great events of Anne's reign, such as the war with France and Spain and the capture of Gibraltar (July 23, 1704), he was too young to think much about. But concerning many of the stirring political events which occurred under the Georges, both he and his brother Charles had their say, both by tongue and pen. Eighteen political pamphlets of the Wesleys show their intense interest in the political questions of the day. Charles speaks in poetry, John in stirring prose.

The first of these is dated 1745. Its title is "Hymns for Times of Trouble and Persecution, by John and Charles Wesley." It has sixty-nine pages. It shows intense loyalty to the reigning George II. It deprecates the European War, which had been raging since

The Real John Wesley.

1742, and which did not end until 1748. It expresses fear lest there should be a civil war, brought about by the Jacobite Pretender. The prayers for the king and the royal family show that the brothers were no Jacobites. It champions Protestantism, calls the English to confess their sins, because of which the Wesleys regard these wars as permitted by God. It also aims to comfort the Methodists in those times of persecution, when often they were charged with being allied to the papists. These latter are entitled "Hymns to Be Sung in a Tumult." In these hymns we seem to hear the echoes of the Porteus riots, in Edinburgh, in 1736, and of the march of the young Pretender from Scotland to invade England in this same year of publication, 1745. How much these stirring hymns had to do with his defeat at Culloden, April 16, 1746, we can not say. Three editions were issued, also a second tract of twelve pages, entitled "Hymns for Times of Trouble."

In the reign of George III, John Wesley the politician appears. His reign began in 1760, and lasted until 1820. Wesley did not enter the political arena from choice. We

John Wesley and Politics.

rather wish he had kept out of it entirely. He began on this wise: 1770 was a year of great unrest in England. The first decade of the reign of George III had been marked by British victories over France and Spain. From Spain England had wrested Havana, the capital of Cuba and the Philippine Islands. Pitt's Prime Ministry had been marked by a series of triumphs, but there was much internal dissension in England. Foolish King George had begun to oppress the American colonists, and trouble was brewing in America. Bute, Pitt's successor, began to move on the works of the notorious John Wilkes, the publisher of the *North Briton*, and had secured his expulsion from the House of Commons on two occasions. The country was up in arms. A friend wrote to John Wesley, asking him to take a hand in affairs. He did not want to do so. He tried to excuse himself by saying, "Politics lie quite out of my province." That every Englishman thinks himself to be a politician, "able to reform the nation, pointed out every blunder of this and that minister, tell every step they ought to take, and be arbiters of all Europe," he ridicules thus: "I grant every cobbler, tinker,

The Real John Wesley.

porter, and hackney coachman can do this; but I am not so deep-learned; while they are sure of everything, I am sure of nothing, except of that very little which I see with my own eyes, or hear with my own ears." Nevertheless he proceeds to give his "naked thoughts, and that without any art or coloring" in a pamphlet of forty-seven pages, "Free Thoughts on the Present State of Public Affairs in a Letter to a Friend." In this he loyally defends the King, the Ministers of State, and the Parliament, and points to what he regards as the deeper and real causes of the unrest, the covetousness, ambition, pride, and envy of the people of England generally. The Christian philosopher, rather than the politician, shines out from the pages of this, his first prose issue on politics. During the next two years (1770-1772) intense excitement prevailed in England. Wilkes kept England astir. The celebrated "Letters of Junius," whose author is still unknown, greatly increased the ferment. Wesley had no use for Wilkes, who had become the people's idol. "Wilkes and Liberty" seems to have been the motto of the people. Wesley saw through Wilkes, and saw further than did

John Wesley and Politics.

the people, and stemmed the tide with two political issues, small but weighty "Thoughts Upon Liberty, by an Englishman: 'I scorn to have my freeborn toe Dragooned into a wooden shoe.'—Prior;" and also "Thoughts Concerning the Origin of Power." The first, of twenty-one pages, is dated February 24, 1772; the other, of twelve pages, is dated 1772. Neither has the name of author, probably to prevent prejudice before reading. In "Liberty" he is very ironical against Wilkes, whose name was stamped on handkerchiefs, cups, etc., and, with "Liberty," seemed to be stamped upon the hearts of the populace. He contends that Englishment have all the liberty that is good for them. He seems to overlook the fact that, whilst the dissenters have religious liberty, they are denied equality. Mere toleration was then chafing them, and they were getting ready to spurn it as an insult.

His "Thoughts Concerning the Origin of Power" was a radically undemocratic pamphlet. He denies the rights of the people to choose their own governors, and that "the people are the source of power." Wesley, the master logician, does not appear in this tract.

The Real John Wesley.

Herein the wise Wesley nods; see the Constitution of the United States of America. However, next year (1773), he redeems himself by his "Thoughts on the Present Scarcity of Provisions," twenty-two pages. This was a timely and wise issue. Food of all kinds was very dear. Work of all kinds was very scarce. Many of the people stood face to face with starvation. The good man's heart is moved for the people. Friday, January 8th, he fasts and prays over it; then rises up, seizes his pen, and depicts the real causes of the trouble. He advises to stop distilling God's good grain, which the people need, into ardent spirits, which they do not need. Find the people work, and "you'll find them meat." Tax the horses and carriages of the rich, and pay off therewith a good part of the national debt, and thus help the poor to live cheaply. The wise philanthropist and the practical politician appear in the same person in this excellent tract for the times.

In 1774 there fell from the press one of his very greatest, though in size a little, work (pp. 53, 8vo), "Thoughts Upon Slavery." One hundred thousand Negroes were being carried, mostly in British ships, from Africa to the

John Wesley and Politics.

American colonies each year, and sold into slavery. Wesley's blood boiled at this outrage on humanity. At first he did not expect to influence Parliament much by his tract, but hoped to influence 'captains, seamen, merchants, and American planters.' It contains a short history of the vile slave-trade, descriptions of Africa, and the manners of the captured ones; the manner in which they are captured, and afterwards treated in the colonies. He then challenges a defense of the nefarious business. It is unanswerable. It was soon reprinted, with additions, in Philadelphia. This was Wesley's first blow at slavery. His last was struck a few days before he died by a letter, the last he ever wrote, to Wilberforce, encouraging him in the good work of Negro emancipation.

The remaining political issues of John Wesley were less fortunate. They pertain to the great American Question, then before England and her colonists. Before even naming them, let us take John Wesley's political portrait. He has done it for us himself in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1785. In that volume his eldest brother, Samuel, was declared

The Real John Wesley.

to have been a Jacobite. Says John Wesley, "No; he was a Tory; so was my father; so am I." He then gives his definition of a Tory: "One that believes God, not the people, to be the origin of power." Into the hands of this self-described Tory John Wesley came Samuel Johnson's recently-issued pamphlet, "Taxation no Tyranny." It was a sad day when Johnson's tract came into the hands of John Wesley. He swallowed it whole, and took sides against the colonists in the issue. Though Johnson lives and moves and has his being in all Wesley's anti-colonist tracts, yet, strange to say, Wesley does not credit him; he only states that he read it and changed his mind on the subject.

The first of these was "A Calm Address to Our American Colonies," 24 pages. It appeared in 1775. He anticipates opposition to his views, and said, "I was well aware of the treatment this would bring upon myself; but let it be, so I may in any degree serve my King and country." He designed to send this to America, but the ports were closed,—but he thinks that "perhaps a hundred thousand copies were scattered in Great Britain and

John Wesley and Politics.

Ireland." Some copies reached New York, but they were destroyed by a Methodist friend who knew what trouble they would cause in America. This tract drew fire in England. Toplady wrote his "An Old Fox Tarr'd and Feather'd By An Hanoverian," against Wesley and his address. The Rev. Caleb Evans, of Bristol, joined with Toplady and others in abusing Wesley for this tract. John Fletcher came to Wesley's rescue with "A Vindication of the Rev. Mr. Wesley's Calm Address," etc., and "American Patriotism," etc. The chief question Wesley did not touch. That question was: "Is it expedient to tax the American Colonies?"

The next year (1776) he published "Some Observations on Liberty: Occasioned by a Late Tract," 36 pages. The late tract referred to was written by Dr. Price, a Unitarian minister who sided with the Colonists. Wesley says of it: "I began an answer to that dangerous tract, Dr. Price's 'Observations Upon Liberty,' which, if practiced, would overturn all government, and bring in universal anarchy." (Journal, April 4, 1776.) In the same year he sent out "A Seasonable Address to the More

The Real John Wesley.

Serious Part of the Inhabitants of Great Britain, Respecting the Unhappy Contest Between Us and Our American Brethren: With an Occasional Word Interspersed to Those of a Different Complexion, by a Lover of Peace," 18 pages. In this Wesley dwells on the horrors of war, especially of fratricidal war. He exhorts to repent of sinfulness, and views the war as God's judgment against the iniquity of the people.

"A Calm Address to the Inhabitants of England, by John Wesley, London, 1777," was occasioned by the threatened revolts in Bristol, one of his head centers, and a seaport largely affected by the American war. It is of the same anti-American character. In 1778, England and Ireland were represented as being in a state of ruin, caused by the wars then on hand. Pessimists drew an awful picture. The optimistic Dean of Gloucester answered them. Wesley was so pleased with this answer that he added to it his own observations, as he had gone through England, and published two pamphlets, "A Serious Address to the People of England, with Regard to the State of the Nation," 28 pages, and "A Com-

John Wesley and Politics.

passionate Address to the Inhabitants of Ireland," 11 pages.

Charles Wesley also opposed the Colonists, and wrote verses against them and their cause. They occur in the tracts, "Hymns for the Nation in 1782," and, with the same title, Part II, pages 12 and 11. Many editions were issued in 1782, but none with the author's name. Some have concluded that John Wesley wrote them. To us it seems sure that Charles was the author. As they are so scarce we insert two of them. Others are entitled: Hymn I, "After the Defeat of the Chesapeake;" "For His Majesty King George;" "For Concord;" "Thy Kingdom Come," etc. The first we give is entitled "A Paper for the Congress."

"True is the Oracle divine,

The sentence which thy lips hath past;
Though hand in hand the wicked join,
They shall not, Lord, escape at last;
Who for a while triumphant seem,
Curst with their own false hearts' desire,
Their empire is a fleeting dream,
Their hopes shall in the smoke expire.

Surely thou wilt vengeance take
On rebels 'gainst their king and God,
And strictest inquisition make
For rivers spilt of guiltless blood,

The Real John Wesley.

By men who take thy name in vain,
By fiends in sanctity's disguise;
As thou wert served with nations slain,
Or pleased with human sacrifice.

Thou know'st thine own appointed time
Th' ungodly homicides to quell,
Chastise their complicated crime,
And break their covenant with hell;
Thy plagues shall then o'erwhelm them all,
From proud Ambition's summits driven;
And Faith foresees the 'Usurper's' fall
As Lucifer cast down from heaven.

Yet, if they have not sinned the sin
Which never can obtain thy grace,
When Tophet yawns to take them in,
And claims them, as the proper place—
The authors of our woes forgive,
And snatch their souls from endless woes,
Who would'st that all mankind should live,
Who died'st thyself to save thy foes."

The first three stanzas, are to say the least, not overburdened with sweetness and light. The end is better than the beginning of this hymn. The next is a "Hymn for the Loyal Americans." We give the hymn entire:

"Father of everlasting love,
The only refuge of despair,
Thy bowels toward th' afflicted move;
And now thou hear'st the mournful prayer

John Wesley and Politics.

We for our hapless brethren breathe,
Who pant within the jaws of death.

The men who dared their king revere,
And faithful to their oaths abide,
Midst perjured hypocrites sincere,
Harassed, oppressed on every side;
Galled by the tyrant's iron yoke,
By Britain's faithless sons forsook.

Our patriot chiefs betrayed their trust,
To serve their own infernal ends,
The slaves of avarice and lust,
Sparing their foes, they spoiled their friends.
Barely repaid their loyal zeal,
And left them—to the murderer's steel.

As sheep appointed to be slain,
The victims of fidelity,
To man they look for help in vain;
But shall they look in vain to Thee,
God over all, who canst subdue
The hearts which mercy never knew?

Ev'n now thou canst disarm their rage
(If so thy gracious will intends),
The wrath implacable assuage,
The malice of infernal fiends;
Mercy at last compelled to show,
And let the hapless captives go.

Yet if our Brethren's doom be sealed,
And for superior joys designed,
They have their glorious course fulfilled,
To souls beneath the altar joined,

The Real John Wesley.

Their guiltless blood hath found a tongue,
And every drop exclaims—'How long?'

O earth, conceal not thou their blood,
Which loud as Zachariah's cries!
O God, thou just avenging God,
Behold them with thy flaming eyes,
And blast, and utterly consume
Those murtherers of *fanatic* Rome.

Till then, thou bid'st thy servants rest,
Who suffered death for conscience' sake,
And wait to rise completely blest,
The general triumph to partake.
To see the righteous Judge come down
And boldly claim the martyr's crown."

These are the last printed utterances of the brothers Wesley, on American politics. They were by no means the first, nor will they be the last, to be mistaken on great questions. Do not the greatest men sometimes make the greatest mistakes? Both the Wesleys accepted the issues of the war, and John planned the new Church for the new country, and successfully carried out his plan, as witnesseth the Methodist Episcopal Church of America until this day. As we are picturing the real Wesley,

John Wesley and Politics.

justice demands that his attitude toward the Colonists should thus fairly be stated.

Two more tracts on political matters are all we find: "An Estimate of the Manners of the Present Times, 1782," 23 pages. In this he accounts for the evil times which have come upon the people of England on the ground of their evil deeds, such as, "neglect of worship, perjury, and the stupid, senseless, shameless ungodliness of taking the name of God in vain." Scattered through his writings we find thrusts at the political evils of his time. He laments that "Old Sarum," a hill near Salisbury, without a house upon it, should send two members to Parliament, whilst Love, "a town nearly half as large as Islington, should send four members, while every county in North Wales sent only one." He objects to the costly diffusion of English legal documents, for which the people have indirectly to pay.

He wrote against the concession of relief to Roman Catholics, and against Wikes's right to sit in Parliament for Middlesex in 1768. In 1784, when Pitt was in supreme power, he wrote suggesting the readjustment of taxation. As a check to the suicide mania, which raged

The Real John Wesley.

in his day, he advised hanging the bodies in chains in the sight of all the people. Without abating his zeal as a saving evangelist, even in the least, when he saw what he conceived to be a national wrong, or a moral evil, he halted long enough to strike it with his voice and pen.

The mother Wesleyan Methodist Church, like her eldest and greatest daughter, the Methodist Episcopal Church, is a non-political Church. Far into the nineteenth century it was considered to be "a conservative force," as Lord Beaconsfield called it. Doubtless for a long time the majority of its members, as individuals, inclined that way. Leading Wesleyans, like Sir George Chubb, assumed that the body was practically conservative in politics. But when it was demonstrated that of the first one thousand two hundred laymen on whom were bestowed the highest honors of the Conference, election as lay delegates, nine hundred were Home Rulers, it was realized that a great change had come over the great Church. The great agitation which split the Church, and which began in 1849, and resulted in the loss of one hundred thousand

John Wesley and Politics.

members, who went into the "Reform Movement," whilst it took off a very large portion of the Liberals, yet opened the way for those who remained. Since that time the political status of the membership has been growing more and more liberal. The firm stand taken by so many leading spirits against the Education Bill of 1903, and the general warming up towards Dissenters, make it no longer possible to speak truly of British Methodism as being predominantly conservative in politics. The warmest friendliness toward the Church of England now exists, with the feeling of perfect equality in all ecclesiastical matters. It is no longer "The Wesleyan Methodist Society," but "The Wesleyan Methodist Church,"—a body still non-political, as individuals composed of all shades of political opinion. At the great Aquarium Meeting in London, in 1903, perhaps the largest Methodist meeting ever held in London, Dr. Davison clearly stated the position of that Church in these words: "A Church without politics"—at which the cheering was tremendous, as also on what followed—"but non-political in the sense in which John Wesley was non-political—the

The Real John Wesley.

most intense politician of his day on all social questions affecting the morality of the people—the enemy of bribery, a great Poor Law reformer, the man who did more than any one else in his time to destroy slavery.”

John Wesley had no sympathy with those of his societies who counted themselves too pious to vote. In his *Journal*, June 24, 1747, he writes: “We reached Colestock, dripping wet, before seven. The rain ceased while we were in the house, but began again when we took horse, and attended us all the way to Exeter. While we stayed here to-day to dry our clothes, I took the opportunity of writing ‘A Word to a Freeholder.’” This was on the eve of an election. After denouncing bribery, he urges each to vote, saying, “Act as if the whole election depended on your single vote, and as if the whole Parliament depended (and therein the whole nation) on that single person whom you now choose to be a member of it.” “Act you as an honest man, a loyal subject, a true Englishman, a lover of the country, a lover of the Church; in one word, a Christian—one that fears nothing but sin, that seeks noth-

John Wesley and Politics.

ing but heaven, and desires nothing but God; nothing but glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men!" This pamphlet was reissued in 1767, and in 1783. At the Conference in 1767, Wesley advised his preachers to "read everywhere the 'Word to a Freeholder,' " and "disperse it, as it were, with both hands."

Once at St. Ives Wesley found that all those who had votes in an election then imminent were "such as I desired." He gives instances of a political purity that at that time was well nigh miraculous, and adds the following note: "Thursday, 2, was the day for election of Parliament-men. It was begun and ended without any hurry at all. I had a large congregation in the evening, among whom two or three roared for disquietude of their heart, as did many at the meeting which followed." On another occasion, in Bristol, he spent three days in an examination of the society. On the fourth day, he says: "I met those of our society who had votes in the ensuing election, and advised them, 1. To vote, without fee or reward, for the person they judged most worthy: 2. To speak no evil of the person

The Real John Wesley.

they voted against: and 3. To take care their spirits were not sharpened against those that voted on the other side." Is it not significant that immediately after this there followed on "an evening fair and mild, a fruitful season in the new square," when "the Word fell as rain into a fleece of wool, and every day one and another found peace, particularly young persons and children?"

It is evident that in 1781-2 the modern question, "How far is it the duty of a Christian minister to preach politics?" was then before the Methodists. At Lewisham, January 9, 1782, John Wesley answers that question in a letter under this same heading. Would that some of his sons in the gospel had carefully read this letter during the Presidency of McKinley the Beloved, and caught its spirit. The whole letter may be found in *Works*, Vol. XI, p. 148. This extract may suffice for the present:

"'How far is it the duty of a Christian minister to preach politics?'

"1. It is impossible to answer this question before it is understood. We must, there-

John Wesley and Politics.

fore, endeavor to understand it, and then it will be easy to answer.

"2. There is a plain command in the Bible, 'Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people.' But notwithstanding this, many that are called religious people speak evil of him continually. . . .

"3. Now, when a clergyman comes into a place where these false stories have been propagated and are generally believed, if he guards the people against this evil speaking by refuting those slanders, many cry out, 'O, he is preaching politics.' . . .

"4. It is always difficult and frequently impossible for private men to judge of the measures taken by men in public offices. We do not see many of the grounds which determine them to act in this or the contrary manner. Generally, therefore, it behooves us to be silent, as we may suppose they know their own business best. But when they are censured without any color of reason, and when an odium is cast on the king by that means, we ought to preach politics in this sense also; we ought publicly to confute those unjust cen-

The Real John Wesley.

sure, only remembering still that this is rarely to be done and only when fit occasion offers, it being our main business to preach 'repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.' "

With these political writings of Wesley, we conclude that he was a faithful citizen of this world, as well as a pilgrim ever journeying toward the better country, that is, the heavenly.

CHAPTER XIII.

John Wesley, Temperance Reformer.

"1. ARE you a man? God made you a man; but you make yourself a beast. Wherein does a man differ from a beast? Is it not chiefly in reason and understanding? But you throw away what reason you have. You strip yourself of your understanding. You do all you can to make yourself a mere beast; not a fool, not a madman only, but a swine, a poor, filthy swine. Go and wallow with them in the mire! Go, drink on, till thy nakedness be uncovered, and shameful spewing be thy glory!

"2. O how honorable is a beast of God's making compared to one who makes himself a beast! But that is not all. You make yourself a devil. You stir up all the devilish tempers that are in you, and gain others, which perhaps were not in you; at least you heighten

The Real John Wesley.

and increase them. You cause the fire of anger, or malice, or lust, to burn seven times hotter than before. At the same time you grieve the Spirit of God, till you drive him quite away from you; and whatever spark of good remained in your soul you drown and quench at once.

“3. So you are now just fit for every work of the devil, having cast off all that is good or virtuous, and filled your heart with everything that is bad, that is earthly, sensual, devilish. You have forced the Spirit of God to depart from you; for you would take none of his reproof; and you have given yourself up into the hands of the devil, to be led blindfold by him at his will.”

Thus begins a four paged tract, written by John Wesley, November 28, 1745. It is entitled “A Word to a Drunkard.” It is one of a series: “A Word to a Street-Walker,” “A Word to a Sabbath-Breaker,” “A Word to Protestants,” and, “Swear not at All.” With this kind of ammunition he filled the pockets of his soldier preachers and volunteer workers. This tract shows his attitude toward the drunkard, the product of the rum curse.

John Wesley, Temperance Reformer.

Drunkards abounded in his day. How does he address himself to his preachers? He has recently returned from Ireland, and writes to one of his preachers named Hugh Saunderson, at Armagh, under date of April 24, 1769. After seven other advices, "(8) Touch no dram. It is liquid fire. It is sure though slow poison. It saps the very springs of life. In Ireland, above all countries of the world, I would sacredly abstain from this, because the evil is so general; and to this, and snuff, and smoky cabins, I impute the blindness which is so exceeding common throughout the nation." From an old copy of the Minutes of 1765, we take the question:

Q. "How can we cure them [the members] of drinking drams? A. 1. Let no preacher drink any, on any pretense. 2. Strongly dissuade our people from it. 3. Answer their pretenses; particularly those of curing the cholic, and helping digestion."

Having read his addresses to the drunkard and to his preachers, turn again to his sermon, No. 50, on "The Use of Money" and read his burning words on rum-selling.

"4. Neither may we gain by hurting our

The Real John Wesley.

neighbor in his body. Therefore we may not sell anything which tends to impair health. Such is eminently all that liquid fire, commonly called drams, or spirituous liquors. It is true, these may have a place in medicine; they may be of use in some bodily disorders; although there would rarely be occasion for them, were it not for the unskillfulness of the practitioner. Therefore such as prepare and sell them only for this end may keep their conscience clear. But who are they? Who prepare them only for this end? Do you know ten such distillers in England? Then excuse these. But all who sell them in the common way to any that will buy are poisoners general. They murder His Majesty's subjects by wholesale; neither does their eye pity or spare. They drive them to hell, like sheep. And what is their gain? Is it not the blood of these men? Who, then, would envy their large estates and sumptuous palaces? A curse is in the midst of them; the curse of God cleaves to the stones, the timber, the furniture of them! The curse of God is in their gardens, their walks, their groves; a fire that burns to the nethermost hell! Blood, blood, is there;

John Wesley, Temperance Reformer.

the foundation, the floor, the walls, the roof, are stained with blood! And canst thou hope, O thou man of blood, though thou art clothed in scarlet, and fine linen, and farest sumptuously every day, canst thou hope to deliver down thy fields of blood to the third generation? Not so; for there is a God in heaven; therefore thy name shall soon be rooted out. Like as those whom thou hast destroyed, body and soul, 'thy memorial shall perish with thee!'

If any temperance reformer before or since Wesley's day has used stronger terms of denunciation of the liquor-traffic than these, we have yet to read or hear them. Certainly his is "shotting speech" on the burning question of rum-drinking and rum-selling. Wesley, wise reformer as he was, began with the individual. He knew the power of the unit, and its true relation to the mass. Like his Master he attached tremendous importance to the individual man or woman who had become ensnared in this evil. He went for him with his "A Word to a Drunkard." He sent his preachers and people after him with the printed page, and with the living voice of warning.

The Real John Wesley.

He zealously sought to purge his own people from the dram habit so prevalent in those times. From the pulpit, and in the open air, where among his hearers were distillers and dealers, he thundered and lightened against the monster evil of his day and generation. He knew that sober individuals would make a sober nation. He knew that to realize this would take much time; therefore, though burning with indignation against the evil, he was not impatient for immediate results. He had unquestioning faith in the power of the truths he uttered. He believed in the day after to-morrow as well as the present day. He was content to labor and to wait. He did not undertake to reform the laws of England; the time for that was not yet come. He did undertake to reform the drunkard and the drunkard-maker. His policy for them was not coercion, but conversion, not mere reformation from the use of the ardent spirit, but regeneration by the Holy Spirit. In all this he was generations upon generations ahead of his times.

Now see some of the results of John Wesley's temperance work.

"In England the drinking of spirituous

John Wesley, Temperance Reformer.

liquors increased from two million gallons in 1710 to twenty million gallons in 1742, the year Mr. Wesley's rule was adopted. During the next eight years the consumption of liquors had been greatly reduced, and from 1750 to 1780 the average annual amount was only three million gallons. This change was not wholly attributable to Mr. Wesley, but it occurred during the years of his greatest activity, and doubtless was a result of the restraints placed upon themselves by his followers, most of whom came from the drinking class; for though restrictive laws were passed by Parliament, contemporary history speaks of them as a dead letter."—David D. Thompson in *Methodist Review*, July-August, 1902.

How much influence John Wesley's temperance principles and utterances had to do with the progress of the temperance cause in the century just closed can not be measured; but certainly the Methodist Episcopal Church in America, which is the oldest temperance organization in the country, and the pioneer of total abstinence in America, could never have become what it is, or do what it

The Real John Wesley.

has done for temperance, as well as for righteousness, had not our great founder taken the stand which he did. Strange to say, British Methodists of Wesley's own Conference, the mother of all Methodist Conferences, are even now far behind the eldest daughter Church on this great question. But John Wesley's influence has not yet died out in that "right little, tight little island." As an illustration of this: In one of her lectures, Frances Willard told the story of a young nobleman who found himself in a little village away off in Cornwall, where he had never been before. It was a hot day, and he was thirsty, and his thirst increased as he rode up and down the village streets seeking in vain for a place where something stronger than water could be had.

At last he stopped and made impatient inquiry of an old peasant who was on his way home after a day of toil.

"How is it that I can't get a glass of liquor anywhere in this wretched village of yours?" he demanded, harshly.

The old man, recognizing his questioner as a man of rank, pulled off his cap and

John Wesley, Temperance Reformer.

bowed humbly, but nevertheless there was a proud flash in his faded eyes as he answered quietly :

“My lord, something over a hundred years ago a man named John Wesley came to these parts,” and with that the peasant walked on.

It would be interesting to know just what the nobleman thought as he pursued his thirsty way. But what a splendid testimony was this to the preaching of John Wesley ! For more than a century the word that he had spoken for his Master had kept the curse of drunkenness out of that village ; and who can estimate the influence for good thus exerted upon the lives of those sturdy peasants ? What nobler memorial could be desired by any Christian minister ?

CHAPTER XIV.

John Wesley Recreating.

JOHN WESLEY ON CHEERFULNESS.

“You seem to apprehend that I believe religion to be inconsistent with cheerfulness, and with a sociable friendly temper. So far from it, I am convinced, as true religion or holiness can not be without cheerfulness, so steady cheerfulness, on the other hand, can not be without holiness or true religion. And I am equally convinced, that religion has nothing sour, austere, unsociable, unfriendly, in it; but, on the contrary, implies the most winning sweetness, the most amiable softness and gentleness. Are you for having as much cheerfulness as you can? So am I. Do you endeavor to keep alive your taste for all the truly innocent pleasures of life? So do I likewise. Do you refuse no pleasure but what is a hindrance to some greater good or has

John Wesley Recreating.

a tendency to some evil? It is my very rule; and I know no other by which a sincere, reasonable Christian can be guided.”—Letter to Mrs. Chapman, March 29, 1737.

ON SOCIAL FUNCTIONS.

“Let the candor with which our Lord accepted this invitation and his gentleness and prudence at this ensnaring entertainment teach us to mingle the wisdom of the serpent with the innocence and sweetness of the dove. Let us neither absolutely refuse all favors, nor resent all neglects from those whose friendship is at best very doubtful, and their intimacy by no means safe.”—Comment on St. Luke vii, 36, “And one of the Pharisees asked him to eat with him,” etc., in Wesley’s Notes on the New Testament.

“I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil.”—Jesus. (John xvii, 15.)

“Shall the devil have the best music?” Let Charles Wesley reply.

“Listed into the cause of sin,
Why should a good be evil?
Music, alas! too long has been
Pressed to obey the devil.”

The Real John Wesley.

—"The True Use of Musick," CLXXXIX, in "Hymns and Sacred Poems." Vol. II, p. 253, second edition, 1756. First edition appeared in 1749.

With pictures of John Wesley at work we are perfectly familiar. Does he not tell us, under date of September 25, 1786: "I now applied myself in earnest to the writing of Mr. Fletcher's Life, having procured the best materials I could. To this I dedicated all the time I could spare till November, from five in the morning till eight at night. These are my studying hours. I can not write any longer in a day without hurting my eyes."

His eyes were then eighty-three and a half years old. August 16, 1748, he is in Stockton preaching. After the sermon "some gentlemen of Yarm earnestly desired that I would preach there in the afternoon. I refused for some time, being weak and tired; so that I thought preaching thrice in the day, and riding upwards of fifty miles would be work enough. But they would take no denial; so I went with them about two o'clock, and preached at three, in the market place

John Wesley Recreating.

there, to a great multitude of people, gathered together at a few minutes' warning. About seven I preached in the street at Osmotherly. It rained almost all the time, but none went away. We took horse about five."

It was thus he was able to report eight hundred sermons a year, more than two for each day. Tuesday, June 28, 1774, he writes: "This being my birthday, the first day of my seventy-second year, I was considering, How is this that I find just the same strength as I did thirty years ago? That my sight is considerably better now, and my nerves firmer than they were then? That I have none of the infirmities of old age, and have lost several I had in my youth? The grand cause is, the good pleasure of God, who doeth whatsoever pleaseth him. The chief means are: 1. My constantly rising at four for about fifty years. 2. My generally preaching at five in the morning, one of the most healthy exercises in the world. 3. My never traveling less, by sea or land, than four thousand five hundred miles in a year."

Add to these, his own statements, the fact that he either wrote, prefaced, or edited four

The Real John Wesley.

hundred and fifty-three known volumes, ranging from four-page tracts to volumes of the *Arminian Magazine*, fourteen yearly volumes which appeared before his departure, and we have a pretty good picture of John Wesley, the worker. Surely his was a strenuous life! Did he ever stop to play? Did he ever recreate? How was he on vacations? Certainly he did not need "rest and change" by means of travel; therefore he did not know the modern experience of some of his preachers who do thus recuperate—the experience that porters, etc., take all their change in fees, and the hotel-keepers take the "rest." His visits for recreation were little asides from his travels as a preacher. He often took them in, as his Journals prove. For those who could not see those places of interest, he did not lecture on them, but wrote descriptions in his Journals, which are enlivened all along the way by pictures of places he visited. May 11, 1761, and May 14, 1768, he is at Edinburgh. He visits and thus describes:

"Holyrood House, at the entrance of Edinburgh, the ancient place of Scottish kings, is a noble structure. It was rebuilt and fur-

John Wesley Recreating.

nished by King Charles the Second. One side of it is a picture gallery, wherein are pictures of all the Scottish kings, and an original one of the celebrated Queen Mary. It is scarcely possible for any one who looks at this to think her such a monster as some have painted her; nor indeed for any one who considers the circumstances of her death, equal to that of an ancient martyr."

Seven years later he visits it again.

"May 14, 1768.—I walked once more through Holyrood House, a noble pile of buildings; but the greatest part of it is left to itself, and so (like the palace of Scone) swiftly running to ruin. The tapestry is dirty and quite faded; the fine ceilings dropping down; and many of the pictures in the gallery torn or cut through. This was the work of good General Hawley's soldiers (like general, like men!) who, after running away from the Scots at Falkirk, revenged themselves on the harmless canvas!"

On July 4, 1786, "Wentworth House, the splendid seat of the late Marquis of Rockingham," is visited and described, and October 19, 1786, "Lord Salisbury's seat at Hatfield."

The Real John Wesley.

June 4, 1787, it is the Bishop of Londonderry's garden and summer-house. On September 12th, of the same year, Mount Edgumbe, in Cornwall, is described and compared with Lord Harcourt's seat at Newnham. "And are all these things to be burned up?" he asks. July 30, 1788, the Pelham Mausoleum is visited and fully described. "It is computed the whole building will cost sixty thousand pounds." This is taken in on his way from Epworth to Grimsby. October 27, 1788, Blaise Castle and Lord Clifford's seat at King's Weston, both near Bristol, are visited and carefully pictured for his readers. These are but specimens of visits and descriptions of pleasant places where he turned aside to recreate for awhile.

He also sought indoor amusements. But before we write of these let us turn to paragraph 248 of the present Discipline—for the older ones do not have it in them—on "dancing," "attending theaters," etc. "The Nature, Design, and General Rules of the United Societies in London, Bristol, Kingswood, and Newcastle-upon-Tyne" were dated May 1, 1766, and signed John Wesley, Charles Wesley. The "Rules of the Band Societies," were

John Wesley Recreating.

drawn up December 25, 1738, and "Directions Given to the Band Societies" were dated December 25, 1744. These belong to the good old Wesleyan days. But in them is not a word on these present burning questions. Did John Wesley approve of dancing? That he did not make abstinence from it a condition of membership in his societies, does not imply that he approved of it. He has spoken of this subject, and wisely, too—not in mandatory tones, nor in the way of forbiddance, but in a wiser way. Turn to his sermon on "The More Excellent Way" (No. 89). He has been speaking of "hare-hunting, horse-racing," etc. He says:

"Balls and assemblies, though more reputable than masquerades, yet must be allowed by all impartial persons to have exactly the same tendency. So, undoubtedly, have all public dancings. And the same tendency they must have, unless the same caution obtains among modern Christians which was observed among the ancient heathens. With them, men and women never danced together, but always in separate rooms. This was always observed in ancient Greece, and for several ages at

The Real John Wesley.

Rome, where a woman dancing in company with men would at once have been set down as a prostitute. Of playing at cards I say the same as of seeing plays—I could not do it with a clear conscience. *But I am not obliged to pass sentence on those that are otherwise minded. I leave them to their own Master; to him let them stand or fall.*"

His argument against the dance is based on the law of tendency and direction. Will the next General Conference Wesleyize paragraph 248? If so, we think that very many thinking young people, who now refuse to be *ruled* by the General Conference, will accept Wesley's principle and freely waive their right, and will say with Bishop Vincent, we would "better not" dance.

What was Wesley's attitude toward the theater? In all his Journals we only once find him in a real theater at a play. He refers to it under date of March 25, 1750. He is crossing to Ireland, and writes of a fellow passenger: "Mr. Gr——, of Carnarvonshire, a clumsy, overgrown, hard-faced man, whose countenance I could only compare to that (which I

John Wesley Recreating.

saw in Drury Lane thirty years ago) of one of the ruffians in 'Macbeth.' "

He was then a Charterhouse schoolboy. Later, in the sermon on "The More Excellent Way," he says:

"It seems a great deal more may be said in defense of seeing a serious tragedy. I could not do it with a clear conscience—at least not in an English theater, the sink of all profaneness and debauchery; *but possibly others can.*"

On December 14, 1768, we find him at a Latin play:

"I saw the Westminster scholars act the 'Adelphi of Terence,—an entertainment not unworthy of a Christian. O, how these heathens shame us! Their very comedies contain both excellent sense, the liveliest pictures of men and manners, and as fine strokes of genuine morality as may be found in the writings of Christians."

Thus John Wesley, aged sixty-five years, patronizes the Latin play given by the college boys at Westminster, busy man as he was on that London trip. On Wednesday, March 29, 1764, he treats himself to an oratorio:

The Real John Wesley.

"I heard 'Judith,' an oratorio performed at the Lock. Some parts of it were exceedingly fine; but there are two things in all modern pieces of music which I could never reconcile to common sense: One is, singing the same words ten times over; the other, singing different words by different persons, at one and the same time. And this, in the most solemn addresses to God, whether by way of prayer or thanksgiving. This can never be defended by all the musicians in Europe, till reason is quite out of date."

The "Lock" was not a theater, but a hospital, in which was a chapel for religious services.

The entertainment question seems to have been up for consideration among the Methodists of 1781. The concerts given by the Wesley boys, sons of Charles, in Chesterfield Street, seem to have come under the ban. "John Wesley, in gown and bands, attended one of the concerts with his wife, to show that he did not consider that there was any sin in such entertainments, as some of the Methodists were inclined to think. General

John Wesley Recreating.

Oglethorpe, now more than eighty years old, came on February 25, 1781, to hear the sons of his old secretary. Here he met John Wesley, and kissed his hand in token of respect." (Telford's "Life of Charles Wesley," first edition, p. 191.) What a picture to see Oglethorpe, over eighty years of age, kissing the hand of John Wesley, aged seventy-eight years! The two old gentlemen recreating at a concert patronized also by such as the Bishop of London, Lord Dartmouth, Lord Barrington, Lord and Lady De Spencer, the Danish ambassador and others! The tickets for the course were three guineas each. Doubtless John Wesley and wife had complimentary tickets. He did not spend his guineas in just that way, though he enjoyed the music. John Wesley sought variety in his choice of entertainments. In 1787 he writes:

"Friday, 10th.—At six I preached to nearly the same number on Heb. iv, 14. In the afternoon I went with a gentleman [Mr. Taylor] to hear the famous musician that plays upon the glasses. By my appearing there (as I had foreseen) a heap of gentry

The Real John Wesley.

attended in the evening; and I believe several of them, as well as Mr. T. himself, did not come in vain."

As we read that entry, there came to mind, "He that winneth souls is wise."

On December 10, 1787, the dear old gentleman, now in his eighty-fifth year, indulges in a visit to the Wax Works:

"I was desired to see the celebrated wax-works at the museum in Spring Gardens. It exhibits most of the crowned heads in Europe, and shows their character in their countenances. Sense and majesty appear in the king of Spain; dullness and sottishness in the King of France; infernal subtlety in the late King of Prussia (as well as in the skeleton Voltaire); calmness and humanity in the Emperor, and King of Portugal; exquisite stupidity in the Prince of Orange; and amazing coarseness, with everything that is unamiable, in the Czarina. In the evening I preached at Peckham to a more awakened congregation than ever I observed there before."

Thus John Wesley mingled pleasure-seeking and preaching. His play was always for recreation, in order that he might be able to

John Wesley Recreating.

do better work for the Master. Of course, every student of John Wesley's works knows his attitude towards novel-reading, and that he abridged and published for his people's use a two-volumed novel.

But why write thus of the founder of Methodism? To justify the writer's own conduct? No; for he has not seen a theater play since childhood, and never learned even a two-step dance; but in order to present one side of John Wesley's character, which brings him down from cloudland to solid earth, and shows him to have been very much broader-minded on practical, every-day-occurring questions than are very many of us, his imperfect followers. Space fails us to tell of the conversion of Mrs. Rich, actress, and wife of the proprietor of Covent Garden Theater. It occurred in old West Street Chapel, London, under Charles Wesley's preaching. She refused to go again on the stage, telling her husband that if he forced her to do so, she would denounce the theater instead of acting. Also of the conversion of Lampe, the leading musician of Covent Garden Theater, and musical author, through the reading of John

The Real John Wesley.

Wesley's "Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion," and how both the Wesleys used both of these prominent converts for Christ and Methodism! Lampe composed tunes for Wesley's hymns. The brilliant Mrs. Rich gave the Wesleys access to people whom they could not otherwise reach. Each became a fellow-helper in the Gospel. How far-sighted and how many-sided were both of the Wesleys!

Concerning the amusement paragraph in the Discipline, one of our most thoughtful laymen, wrote in *Zion's Herald*, August 27, 1902:

THE AMUSEMENT QUESTION AND THE CONSTITUTION.

" 'The Amusement Paragraph' is said to be statutory law, and, should, therefore be put into the Discipline. It is also said it should be published in the Discipline under the heading, 'Advice,' so as to take away from it the quality it seems to have as such law. The simple question is: 'Has it any authority as law separate and apart from that already contained in the constitution?' The fact is, that para-

John Wesley Recreating.

graph has *no force*, whether viewed conjunctively, disjunctively, or injunctively in connection with the General Rules, which are now a part of the constitution of the Church, as they then were of the United Societies. It reads nothing into the constitution not already in it; it reads nothing out of it that is already in it; and if it did either, could have no additional force as law or an 'Advice.'

"It will be remembered by all that 'The United Societies' were organized into the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1784; and that the General Conference of 1900 incorporated the General Rules into the constitution of the Church, which has just been proclaimed by the Bishops 'as now the fundamental law of the Church.' By these General Rules 'there is only one condition previously required of those who desire admission into these societies—a desire to flee from the wrath to come and to be saved from their sins. But whenever this is really fixed in the soul, it will be shown by its fruits.' *How?* Let us see:

" 'It is therefore expected of all who continue therein [as members] that they shall continue to evidence their desire of salvation—

The Real John Wesley.

“ ‘First. By doing no harm, by avoiding evil of every kind, especially that which is more generally practiced, such as’—then follows an enumeration of the things that are not to be done any longer, things the novitiate had previously done. This is *reform*, pure and simple (‘fruits meet for repentance’).

“ ‘It is expected of all who continue in these societies that they shall continue to evidence their desire of salvation—

“ ‘Second: By doing good; by being in every kind merciful after their power; as they have opportunity, doing good of every possible sort, and, as far as possible, to all men.’

“ ‘A further enumeration of things to be done then follows. Things not formerly done—further fruits meet for repentance.’ This is simply to *perform*.

“ ‘It is expected of all who desire to continue in these societies that they shall continue to evidence their desire of salvation—

“ ‘Third, by attending upon all the ordinances of God; such are’—and then follows a third enumeration. This is simply to *conform*. Each of these enumerations contains the evidence of continuance of two things: (a)

John Wesley Recreating.

the desire 'to flee from the wrath to come and to be saved from their sins;' (b) the continuance of membership, so that by these things specified as evidences of sincerity, the novitiate continues or discontinues, of himself, such 'member of these societies.'

"It is observed that the novitiate is required to do nothing as evidence of his membership, but is required to do several things as evidence of his desire to continue it and to show that he actually desires to flee from the wrath to come and to be saved from his sins. He is expected to show this by refraining from doing that which is wrong and is inconsistent with his newly assumed relations; and to do things which are consistent with those relations and to observe other forms which are commonly observed by Christian people and commonly accepted as evidence of their continued desire to be Christian people.

"In a word, the whole scheme of this new relation is: 1. Reform from wrong-doing; 2. Perform all right-doing; 3. Conform with all right observance, with a view to salvation from their sins.

"I am not able to see how the paragraph

The Real John Wesley.

simply as a law adds to or subtracts from the possibility of salvation from sin. The relation of a man who desires to become and to continue to be a Christian man, is based, not on statutory law, but upon faith in Christ Jesus as the Savior of men, and this by the individual or voluntary act of that man acting under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

“I believe the exactions of that paragraph are hurtful to the Church, baneful to enlightened conscience, and that every individual must stand or fall on his own personal responsibility in ‘the taking such diversions as can not be used in the name of the Lord Jesus.’ No act has moral character if performed simply because the law prescribes it, and *vice versa*. It must have either the glory of God, or the love of man and the safety of the State, as its underlying inspiration.”

To every letter of which the author of this book says, Amen!

CHAPTER XV.

John Wesley's Courage.

TRUE courage always realizes danger, and always faces it, when it lies in the path of duty. It differs greatly from mere brute stolidity. It never seeks martyrdom. It implies intelligence, and is often attended with fear, and sometimes with trembling. Army officers say that the most courageous soldiers always see the danger ahead.

The early Methodists greatly needed to add to their faith courage, not only for their own spiritual edification, but in order to endure the bitter persecutions of those times. If ever, "with persecutions," applied to Christians, certainly it did to Methodist Christians of the eighteenth century.

The eighteenth century in England was a turbulent season. The masses, though not so dense as those of the nineteenth century, were more mercurial. It took but little to raise a

The Real John Wesley.

mob and to provoke a riot. The crass ignorance of the common people, and their oppressed condition, combined to render them easily inflammable. We sometimes think of the persecutions of that period as being peculiar to the Wesleys and their followers. But we doubt that either Charles or John Wesley suffered more at the hands of mobs than did some of the Parliamentary candidates of that period. Whoever in these later days has seen English mobs, and heard them, may form a pretty accurate idea of the experiences of the early Methodists.

John Wesley was the very embodiment of true courage. How he maintained the courage of his religious convictions, at all times, in all places, and before all kinds of people, is read and known of all. His great courage in great dangers is that of which we are now constrained to write.

Is it true that men renowned for great courage have been, mostly, men little in stature? Certainly it is true in the case of John Wesley. In his one hundred and twenty-two pounds of avoirdupois there was not a grain of cowardice. Like Christ, his Master, he

John Wesley—His Courage.

never needlessly exposed himself, but where duty called, or danger, he was never wanting there.

In his ninth year his mother notes his bravery in bearing the smallpox, "like a man, and, indeed, like a Christian, without complaint." His brother Samuel says of him, whilst he was a boy at Charterhouse school, "Jack is with me, and a brave boy, learning Hebrew as fast as he can." Many of our readers will know how much courage it takes to learn Hebrew, and especially to keep on learning it. We knew of one theologian who, during a period of self-denial in the seminary, was asked what he intended giving up for the time, he quickly answered, "Hebrew." But there is no real danger in knowing Hebrew, notwithstanding the timid fears of the anti-higher critics.

Had John Wesley been at the Epworth Rectory during the ghostly period, we believe he would have ferreted out the real cause of those mysterious noises and freakish appearances. He did his best to solve the problem at a distance. Had he been at home he would doubtless have courageously investigated.

The Real John Wesley.

A striking instance of his courage occurs in his Georgia experiences. General Oglethorpe had undoubtedly been betrayed into evil by evil women. John Wesley, by their confession to him, knew this. Knowing it, he in some degree changed his behavior toward the general. Noticing this, the general said to him: "You observed yesterday the company of Indians that came into the town. The fellow that marched at their head, with his face marked with red paint, will shoot any man in this colony for a bottle of rum." Instead of being scared at this implied threat, John Wesley coolly took a book out of his pocket, and, leaving the room and the astonished general, slowly walked to his own house, reading as he walked. The next morning, as he was reading, with his back towards his window, the light became obstructed; turning, he saw the same Indian at the window. He went to the door, invited the Indian in, and gave him to eat of the best he had in the house. The Indian for a time surveyed Wesley from head to foot, "then throwing down his gun, he seized him in his arms, and kissed him with the greatest eagerness. He then ate heartily, and

John Wesley—His Courage.

departed after another warm embrace, and with every appearance of the highest satisfaction." The general learned that it would take more than a great Indian to scare little John Wesley, the clergyman. Leaving for Europe soon after this, Oglethorpe, in the presence of others, charged Magistrate Causton, saying, "Causton, whatever you do, take heed, if you regard my favor, that you do not quarrel with Mr. Wesley."

Bull-baiting was a favorite pastime with the common herd in Wesley's day. Early in his evangelistic work in Bristol he visited the suburb of Pensford. In his journal for March 19, 1742, we find him there, preaching on a little common, which we once visited. Soon after he began, a hired rabble brought a bull, which they had been baiting, and set him loose in the crowd. Mr. Wesley was standing on a table preaching. The bull seemed uninclined to break up the meeting. Knowing better than its drivers, it refused to charge upon the crowd, or the table and its occupant, and went on either side, "while we quietly sang praise to God, and prayed for about an hour." The persecutors were not content until they had

The Real John Wesley.

dragged the tired bull up to the table. Wesley kindly patted the bull upon the head, as he steered it so that its blood would not drop on his clothes, "intending to go on, as soon as the hurry should be a little over. But the table falling down, some of our friends caught me in their arms, and carried me away on their shoulders, while the rabble wreaked their vengeance on the table, which they tore bit from bit. We went a little way off, where I finished my discourse, without any noise or interruption."

Near Whitechapel, London, in that same year, 1742, some ruffians drove a herd of cattle among the congregation, and then threw a shower of stones, one of which struck Wesley between the eyes. "Wiping away the blood, he continued the service as if nothing had happened." Neither one bull nor much cattle could daunt the courage of this brave little preacher.

A favorite preaching-place of Wesley's in Cornwall was Gwennap, where is that wonderful amphitheater-like pit, at which Wesley often preached, and where services in his honor are now annually held. One day, while preach-

John Wesley—His Courage.

ing there, two fellows rode like maniacs into the congregation, and began to lay hold of the people. Wesley began to sing, when one of the fellows cried, "Seize him! seize him! I say, seize the preacher for His Majesty's service!" Leaping off his horse he seized Wesley by the cassock, crying, "I take you to serve His Majesty!" Wesley coolly walked with him for about three-quarters of a mile, when the courage of the bumptious fellow forsook him, and he was glad to let the little minister go.

The very next day, at Falmouth, the rabble surrounded his stopping-place, crying: "Bring out the Canorum! Where is the Canorum?" Then, having broken open the outer door, they tore the inner door off its hinges. Wesley then coolly came out and asked them: "To which of you have I done any wrong? To you? To you? Or you?" Then he cried, "Neighbors, countrymen! Do you desire to hear me speak?" His courage won them, and they answered, "Yes, yes, he shall speak, he shall: no one shall hinder him!" The roughs charged the parish a little over nine shillings "for driving the Methodists out of the parish." The parish record remains to this day, as also

The Real John Wesley.

do the Methodists in that same parish, thanks largely to the courage of John Wesley, the Methodist preacher. But what splendid Methodists the Cornish people have made ever since that day!

An Irish mob had no more effect on him than did an English one. In 1760 he is in Carrick-upon-Shannon, preaching. A magistrate, with a mob and a drum, came upon the scene to silence him. Whilst the magistrate was haranguing the crowd, Wesley quickly moved his congregation into the garden, back of the house. They tried to force their way into the house; failing, they leaped over the garden-wall. Then, his honor bawled out to Wesley, "You shall not preach here to-day!" "Sir," said Wesley, with the utmost serenity, "I do n't intend it, for I have preached already." His honor then wreaked his vengeance on Wesley's hat, instead of upon his courageous head, which hat, says Wesley, "he beat and kicked most valiantly; but a gentleman rescued it out of his hands, and we rode quietly out of the town."

But the classic instance of great persecutions and of John Wesley's great courage in

John Wesley—His Courage.

them is found in his Journals, under date of October 20, 1743. Woe be to the man who attempts to boil down Wesley's concise Journals; therefore, we give the entire extract.

The place is Wednesbury, in Staffordshire, called the "Black Country." Certainly many black deeds were done there. But it is called the Black Country because it was and is still a region of collieries. The colliers there were inveterate rioters. The chronicles of the place include accounts of the "Church and King Riots of 1791," the labor disputes, or the "bread riots," as they were called; also the Sacheverell riots of 1715,—at least these three great outbreaks among this people occurred before the Wesley riots of 1763.

This was a good field for the Evangelist Wesley, whose rule was, go not only to those who want you, but to those who need you most. Certainly these brutal colliers needed the gospel more than many others. Lady Huntingdon seems to have first become acquainted with this people. In 1742, at her request, Charles Wesley visited Wednesbury, and was then unmolested. In October, 1743, John Wesley rode into town, and inquired for the home

The Real John Wesley.

of Francis Ward, his brother Charles's friend. The man he inquired of was Ward himself, who at once took him to his home. Out-of-door work was soon planned and begun. Parson Egginton at first received Wesley kindly, thinking of him only as a flying visitor, whose work would depart with him. When he found that the work, though not the worker, would abide, he raised a most terrible persecution against Wesley and his followers. The homes of Methodists were looted, their furniture burned, their business-places demolished, and general terror was spread all around. Wesley's courage arose to the occasion. He bore away from there the marks of the Lord Jesus; but he had there done the work of Jesus, and such work as would abide and bless, not only England, but also America, as we shall presently see; but first let us hear John Wesley himself tell the story:

"I rode to Wednesbury. At twelve I preached, in a ground near the middle of the town, to a far larger congregation than was expected, on 'Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever.' I believe every one present felt the power of God, and no creature

John Wesley—His Courage.

offered to molest us either coming or going ; but the Lord fought for us, and we held our peace.

“I was writing at Francis Ward’s in the afternoon, when the cry arose that ‘the mob had beset the house.’ We prayed that God would disperse them ; and it was so ; one went this way, and another that ; so that, in half an hour, not a man was left. I told our brethren, ‘Now is the time for us to go ;’ but they pressed me exceedingly to stay. So, that I might not offend them, I sat down, though I foresaw what would follow. Before five the mob surrounded the house again, in greater numbers than ever. The cry of one and all was, ‘Bring out the minister ; we will have the minister !’ I desired one to take their captain by the hand, and bring him into the house. After a few sentences interchanged between us, the lion was become a lamb. I desired him to go and bring one or two more of the most angry of his companions. He brought in two who were ready to swallow the ground with rage ; but in two minutes they were as calm as he. I then bade them make way, that I might go out among the people. As soon as I was

The Real John Wesley.

in the midst of them, I called for a chair, and standing up, asked, 'What do you want with me?'

"Some said, 'We want you to go with us to the justice.' I replied, 'That I will do with all my heart.' I then spoke a few words, which God applied, so that they cried out with might and main, 'The gentleman is an honest gentleman, and we will spill our blood in his defense.' I asked, 'Shall we go to the justice to-night or in the morning?' Most of them cried, 'To-night, to-night,' on which I went before, and two or three hundred followed, the rest returning whence they came.

"The night came on before we had walked a mile, together with heavy rain. However, on we went to Bentley Hall, two miles from Wednesbury. One or two ran before to tell Mr. Lane they had brought Mr. Wesley before his worship. Mr. Lane replied: 'What have I to do with Mr. Wesley? Go and carry him back again.' By this time the main body came up, and began knocking at the door. A servant told them Mr. Lane was in bed. His son followed, and asked, 'What is the matter?' One replied, 'Why, an't please you, they sing

John Wesley—His Courage.

psalms all day; nay, and make folks rise at five o'clock in the morning; and what would your worship advise us to do?' 'To go home,' said Mr. Lane, 'and be quiet.'

"Here they were at a full stop, till one advised to go to Justice Persehouse at Walsal. All agreed to this. So we hastened on, and about seven came to his house. But Mr. P. likewise sent word that he was in bed. Now they were at a stand again; but at last they all thought it the wisest course to make the best of their way home. About fifty of them undertook to convoy me; but we had not gone a hundred yards when the mob of Walsal came pouring in like a flood, and bore down all before them. The Darlaston mob made what defense they could; but they were weary as well as outnumbered, so that in a short time many being knocked down, the rest ran away and left me in their hands.

"To attempt speaking was vain, for the noise on every side was like the roaring of the sea; so they dragged me along till we came to the town, where, seeing the door of a large house open, I attempted to go in, but a man, catching me by the hair, pulled me back into

The Real John Wesley.

the middle of the mob. They made no more stop till they carried me through the main street from one end of the town to the other. I continued speaking all the time to those within hearing, feeling no pain or weariness. At the west end of the town, seeing a door half-open, I made toward it, and would have gone in, but a gentleman in the shop would not suffer me, saying they would 'pull the house down to the ground.' However, I stood at the door and asked, 'Are you willing to hear me speak?' Many cried out, 'No, no! knock his brains out! Down with him; kill him at once!' Others said, 'Nay, but we will hear him first.' I began asking, 'What evil have I done? Which of you all have I wronged in word or deed?' and continued speaking for above a quarter of an hour, till my voice suddenly failed. Then the floods began to lift up their voice again, many crying out, 'Bring him away; bring him away.'

"In the meantime my strength and my voice returned, and I broke out aloud into prayer; and now the man who just before headed the mob turned and said, 'Sir, I will spend my life for you; follow me, and not one

John Wesley—His Courage.

soul here shall touch a hair of your head!’ Two or three of his fellows confirmed his words, and got close to me immediately; at the same time the gentleman in the shop cried out, ‘For shame! for shame! Let him go.’ An honest butcher, who was a little farther off, said it was a shame they should do thus, and pulled back four or five, one after another, who were running on the most fiercely. The people, then, as if it had been by common consent, fell back to the right and left, while those three or four men took me between them and carried me through them all. But on the bridge the mob rallied again; we therefore went on one side, over the mill-dam, and thence through the meadows, till a little before ten God brought me safe to Wednesbury, having lost only one flap of my waistcoat and a little skin from one of my hands.

“I never saw such a chain of providences before; so many convincing proofs that the hand of God is on every person and thing, and overruling all as it seemeth him good.

“From the beginning to the end I found the same presence of mind as if I had been sitting in my own study, but I took no thought of

The Real John Wesley.

one moment before another ; only once it came into my mind that, if they should throw me into the river, it would spoil the papers that were in my pocket ; for myself, I did not doubt but I should swim across, having but a thin coat and a light pair of boots.

“The circumstances that follow, I thought, were particularly remarkable: 1. That many endeavored to throw me down while we were going down hill on a slippery path to the town ; as well judging, that if I was once on the ground, I should hardly rise any more ; but I made no stumble at all, nor the least slip, until I was entirely out of their hands. 2. That, although many strove to get hold of my collar or clothes to put me down, they could not fasten at all ; only one got fast hold of the flap of my waistcoat, which was soon left in his hand ; the other flap, in the pocket of which was a banknote, was torn but half off. 3. That a lusty man, just behind, struck at me several times with a large oaken stick, with which, if he had struck me once on the back part of my head, it would have saved him all further trouble ; but every time the blow was turned aside, I know not how, for I could not move

John Wesley—His Courage.

to the right hand or the left. 4. That another came rushing through the press, and, raising his arm to strike, on a sudden let it drop, and only stroked my head, saying, 'What soft hair he has!' 5. That I stopped exactly at the mayor's door, as if I had known it (which the mob doubtless thought I did), and found him standing in the shop, which gave the first check to the madness of the people. 6. That the very first men whose hearts were turned were the heroes of the town, the captains of the rabble on all occasions, one of them having been a prize-fighter at the beer-garden. 7. That from first to last I heard none of them give a reviling word or call me by any opprobrious name whatever; but the cry of one and all was, 'The preacher! The preacher! The parson! The minister!' 8. That no creature, at least within my hearing, laid anything to my charge, either true or false, having in the hurry quite forgot to provide themselves with an accusation of any kind. And, lastly, that they were as utterly at a loss what they should do with me, none proposing any determinate thing, only, 'Away with him; kill him at once.'

The Real John Wesley.

“By how gentle degrees does God prepare us for his will! Two years ago a piece of brick grazed my shoulders. It was a year after that the stone struck me between the eyes. This month I received one blow, and this evening two, one before we came into the town, and one before we were gone out; but both were as nothing; for though one struck me on the breast with all his might, and the other on the mouth with such force that the blood gushed out immediately, I felt no pain from either of the blows, more than if they had touched me with a straw.

“It ought not to be forgotten that when the rest of the society made all haste to escape for their lives, four only would not stir, William Sitch, Edward Slater, John Griffiths, and Joan Parks; these kept with me, resolving to live or die together, and none of them received one blow but William Sitch, who held me by the arm from one end of the town to the other. He was then dragged away and knocked down, but he soon rose and got to me again. I afterward asked him what he expected when the mob came upon us. He said, ‘To die for Him who died for us;’ and he felt no hurry or fear,

John Wesley—His Courage.

but calmly waited till God should require his soul of him.

“When I came back to Francis Ward’s I found many of our brethren waiting upon God. Many, also, whom I had never seen before came to rejoice with us, and in the morning, as I rode through the town on my way to Nottingham, every one I met expressed such a cordial affection that I could scarcely believe what I saw and heard.”

AN EXTRAORDINARY OFFICIAL DOCUMENT.

Mr. Wesley next quotes in full a remarkable document which had been previously issued by “His Majesty’s Justices,” adding that “they were the very justices to whose houses I was carried, and who severally refused to see me!

“STAFFORDSHIRE.

“To all High-Constables, Petty-Constables, and other of His Majesty’s Peace-Officers within the said county, and particularly to the Constable of Tipton (near Walsal) :

“Whereas, We, His Majesty’s Justices of the Peace for the said county of Stafford, have received information that several disorderly

The Real John Wesley.

persons, styling themselves, Methodist Preachers, go about raising routs and riots, to the great damage of His Majesty's liege people, and against the peace of our Sovereign Lord the King:

"These are, in His Majesty's name, to command you and every one of you, within your respective districts, to make diligent search after the said Methodist Preachers, and to bring him or them before some of us, His said Majesty's Justices of the Peace, to be examined concerning their unlawful doings.

"Given under our hands and seals, this — day of October, 1743.

"(Signed,) J. LANE,

"W. PERSEHOUSE."

CHARLES WESLEY'S STATEMENT CONCERNING HIS BROTHER'S PERIL.

"The Rev. Thomas Jackson, one of Mr. Wesley's biographers, says that, having made his escape from the Staffordshire rioters, Mr. Wesley went to Nottingham, where he was met by his brother, Mr. Charles Wesley, who had encountered similar treatment in his preaching visits in various parts of the coun-

John Wesley—His Courage.

try. Charles says in his own journal: 'My brother came delivered out of the mouth of the lion! His clothes were torn to tatters. He looked a soldier of Christ. The mob of Wednesbury, Darlaston, and Walsal were permitted to take and carry him about for several hours, with a full intent to murder him; but his work is not yet finished, or he had been now with the souls under the altar.'

"Mr. Charles Wesley, after a hurried interview with his brother at Nottingham, hastened to Wednesbury to encourage the suffering Methodist society. He found them still holding on to their work in a mind and spirit undaunted by their adversaries. He boldly preached twice among them, and received several new members into the society. He also admitted on trial 'the young man whose arm had been broken, and Munchin, the late captain of the mob. He has been constantly under the word,' added Charles, 'since he rescued my brother. I asked him what he thought of him now? "Think of him?"' he responded. "That he is a man of God; and God was on his side when so many of us could not kill one man!"' "

The Real John Wesley.

Thus again the blood of martyrs became the seed of the Church. Methodism has flourished in Wednesbury ever since. Before us, as we write, is a series of pictures of Methodist places of interest in Wednesbury; such as the horse-block, from which Wesley preached; the old Town Hall, in which Methodist meetings were held until 1760, when the first chapel was built; and also the present chapels and some of the worthies of Wednesbury Methodism.

Some of the results of Wednesbury Methodism come very near to us American Methodists. To the new chapel in 1761 came a young man to hear John Wesley for the first time. He was won to Christ and to Methodism. His name was Francis Asbury. He became the "John Wesley of America."

Later was converted there, Richard Whatcoat, who, in 1784, was ordained by John Wesley for work in America, and who later became the third in an honored line of bishops. From about four miles distant used to come to hear John Wesley "Brother Dartmouth," as he wished there to be called. He was Lord Dartmouth. One of our New England col-

John Wesley—His Courage.

leges bears his name. There, in Wednesbury, was born, in 1835, one who was destined to become an editor of our *Western Christian Advocate*, Dr. J. H. Bayliss. He was converted at Spring Head Chapel, Wednesbury, emigrated to America, and entered the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1857, and died at his post in 1889.

These are only a few of the great souls who were born from above, born of the Spirit, in the town of Wednesbury, which to this day is all alive with the Methodist spirit. Had John Wesley's courage failed him there in 1743, it is very improbable that we, in this bi-centennial year of his birth, would be able to write of such results of persecution and courage as were displayed there in 1743.

CHAPTER XVI.

John Wesley—His Wit and Humor.

WITH John Wesley the grave we are all familiar; not all of us are equally familiar with John Wesley the gay. Gravity and gayety were mingled in his character in wise and helpful proportions. Few men of his century prayed more than he; no man worked longer and harder. We knew a much-honored Methodist Doctor of Divinity who once tried to imitate his ideal, John Wesley. Though of nearly twice the avoirdupois, and blessed with perfect health, he almost died in the attempt to work as many hours in the day as Wesley did. Divine grace did very much for John Wesley; a natural gayety of disposition, increased by wise cultivation, became a good field for the operation of the grace of sweetness in which to work.

Moore and Whitehead, both of whom were

John Wesley—His Wit and Humor.

most intimate friends, as well as his biographers and legatees, say: "Mr. Wesley's natural temper in his youth was gay and sprightly, with a turn for wit and humor." Both give the following illustration: In the summer of 1724, when John was at Oxford, and in his twenty-first year, his brother Samuel, of Westminster School, had broken his leg. He wrote the news to John, and asked him for some verses as specimens of his turning the ancient classics into English. He sent him a letter and some humorous verses, we suppose to cheer him up. The letter is dated June 17, 1724. In it he says:

"I believe I need not use many arguments to show I am sorry for your misfortune, though at the same time I am glad you are in a fair way of recovery. If I had heard of it from any one else I might probably have pleased you with some impertinent consolation; but the way of your relating it is a sufficient proof that they are what you do n't stand in need of. And, indeed, if I understand you rightly, you have more reason to thank God that you did not break both, than to repine because you have broken one leg. You have

The Real John Wesley.

undoubtedly heard the story of the Dutch seaman who, having broke one of his legs by a fall from the mainmast, instead of condoling himself, thanked God that he had not broke his neck."

The subject of the humorous poem appended is "Chloe's Favorite Flea." It has these introductory words: "Since you have a mind to see some of my verses, I have sent you some, which employed me above an hour yesterday in the afternoon. Here is one, and I am afraid only one good thing about them, that is, they are short."

"FROM THE LATIN

* As over fair Chloe's rosy cheek
Careless a little vagrant passed,
With artful hand around his neck
A slender chain the virgin cast.

As Juno near her throne above,
Her spangled bird delights to see;
As Venus has her fav'rite dove,
Chloe shall have her fav'rite flea.

Pleased at his chains, with nimble steps
He o'er her snowy bosom stray'd;
Now on her panting breast he leaps,
Now hides between his little head.

John Wesley—His Wit and Humor.

Leaving at length his old abode,
He found, by thirst or fortune led,
Her swelling lips that brighter glow'd
Than roses in their native bed.

Chloe, your artful hands undo,
Nor for your captive's safety fear;
No artful hands are needful now
To keep the willing vagrant here.

Whilst on that heav'n 't is given to stay,
(Who would not wish to be so blessed?)
No force can drive him once away,
Till death shall seize his destin'd breast."

These are not the only verses Wesley translated from the Latin classics, but they show his skill in reproducing the thought of the original. We are indebted to Whitehead for this specimen. Moore objected to its publication. Nightingale gave it as a specimen of John Wesley's early poetry, but afterward did public penance in the magazine for reproducing these lines of our founder. They are pre-Methodistic, we allow, but do they not show us the gift which was afterward used to better purpose? They help to show us the real Wesley of this planet, as well as of the skies.

The Real John Wesley.

Like Charles H. Spurgeon, the greatest of the evangelistic preachers of the nineteenth century, John Wesley of the eighteenth used this divine gift of harmless mirth to good purpose. Mr. Babcock, a fellow-student at Oxford, gives us a flashlight picture of John Wesley at twenty-one, by saying he was "the very sensible and acute collegian, baffling every man by the subtleties of his logic, and laughing at them for being so easily routed, a young fellow of the finest classical taste, of the most liberal and manly sentiments."

There was no namby-pambyism about John Wesley at twenty-one, nor after that age. His one hundred and twenty-two pounds was little, but it was all man. He became "a divine" by courtesy, but he never ceased to be a manly man. He "put off the old man," etc., but he did not then, nor afterward, ever "put on the old woman," as it has been thought some of his sons in the gospel later did. Methodists have always admired manly ministers. But it is of his wit and humor we set out to write. He was not a vinegar-faced Christian; his was not "sour godliness." Alexander Knox, who knew him well, writes:

John Wesley—His Wit and Humor.

"His countenance as well as conversation expressed an habitual gayety of heart, which nothing but conscious virtue and innocence could have bestowed. He was, in truth, the most perfect specimen of moral happiness which I ever saw; and my acquaintance with him has done more to teach me what a heaven upon earth is implied in the maturity of Christian piety than all I have elsewhere seen or heard or read, except in the sacred volume."

Knox also speaks of his "sportive sallies of innocent mirth, which delighted the young and thoughtless." Wesley had a preacher, the devout and able, but morbid, Thomas Walsh, who once said to him, "Among the three or four persons that tempted me to levity, you, sir, are one by your witty proverbs." The eloquent Punshon well characterized this excellency of Wesley, saying, "These instances of a wit which ever played across the clear sky of Wesley's life are like summer lightning, having no fork to wound, and only seen in the still evening, when the labors of the day were done."

The marvelous Journals abound in instances of his humor. From June 13 to June

The Real John Wesley.

29, 1775, we find a record of what was feared to be his mortal sickness. So grave was the case that Bradford, his companion, wrote to Charles Wesley, and received this reply, which has recently come to light :

“BRISTOL, *June 29, 1775.*

“Dear Joseph,—Be of good cheer : the Lord liveth ; and all live to him !

“Your last is just arrived ; and cuts off all hope of my brother’s recovery. If he could hold out till now, that is, ten days longer, he might recover ; but I dare not allow myself to hope it, till I hear again from you. The people here and in London, and every place, are swallowed up in sorrow. But sorrow and death will soon be swallowed up in life everlasting.

“You will be careful of my brother’s papers, etc., till you see his executors. God shall reward your fidelity and love.

“I seem scarce separated from him whom I shall so very soon overtake. We were united in our lives and in our death not divided. Brethren, pray a very little longer for your loving servant,

C. WESLEY.”

John Wesley—His Wit and Humor.

The following postscript to the letter we reproduce in facsimile:

Thursday Evening.

Yours of the 20th I have this moment received. It only confirms my fears. My Brother (soon after you wrote) in all probability entered into the Joy of his Lord. Yet—again, I send the particulars. I have not. (I soon more shall have) strength for such a Journey. The Lord prepare us for a speedy Removal to our heavenly Country!

He did not die, but lived to show forth God's praise.

Wesley attributed his recovery, under God, to Joseph Bradford, his faithful traveling companion. It was during those memorable days, whilst "the sweet old man" was lying between life and death his brother Charles wrote to Joseph Bradford. We are indebted to Mr. Hubert Miller, of Eccles, through Mr. Arthur Rawlinson, of Swinton, Manchester, for permission to reproduce this extremely interesting letter.

The Real John Wesley.

Now turn to John's own account of this, which, boiled down, a hard thing to do with John Wesley's writings, would be about as follows:

In the spring and summer of 1775 Wesley was in Ireland. He traveled and preached incessantly. The description of the tour written by himself is, as usual, most interesting. Early in June he was exposed to drenching rains, which at Castle Caulfield "came plentifully through the thatch" into his lodging-room. He makes observation next day, after his manner, on natural history. Still preaching, indoors and out of doors, in rain or heat, he comes to "Mrs. Lark's orchard at Cock-hill," where "the weather being extremely hot, I lay down on the grass. . . . This I had been accustomed to do for forty years, and never remember to have been hurt by it—only I never before lay on my face—in which posture I fell asleep." He awoke to preach "with ease to a multitude of people," and afterwards felt a good deal worse. The story of the next few days is the story of a brave, if injudicious man, fighting against disease.

Finally, "I went straight to Derry-aghy,

John Wesley—His Wit and Humor.

a gentleman's seat, on the side of the hill. . . . Here nature sunk, and I took my bed. But I could no more turn myself therein than a new-born child. Only those words ran in my mind, when I saw Miss Gayer on one side of the bed looking at her mother on the other :

“‘She sat like Patience on a monument,
Smiling at grief.’

. . . I can give no account of what followed for two or three days, being more dead than alive. . . . My tongue was much swollen, and as black as a coal. . . . I was convulsed all over, and for some time my heart did not beat perceptibly, neither was any pulse discernible.

“In the night of Thursday, 22d, Joseph Bradford came to me with a cup, and said, ‘Sir, you must take this.’ I thought, ‘I will, if I can swallow, to please him, for it will do me neither harm nor good.’ Immediately it set me to vomiting; my heart began to beat, and my pulse to play again, and from that hour the extremity of the symptoms abated. The next day I sat up several hours, and walked four or five times across the room.

The Real John Wesley.

On Saturday I sat up all day. . . . On Sunday I came downstairs. . . . On Monday I walked out before the house. On Tuesday I took an airing in the chaise. On Wednesday, trusting in God, . . . I set out for Dublin. . . . After traveling thirty (English) miles, I was stronger than *in* the morning."

Dr. Crookshanks, in his "History of Methodism in Ireland," gives certain additional facts. "One day Mr. Payne, with a few friends at Derry-aghy, earnestly prayed that God would graciously prolong the valuable life of his servant, and, as in the case of Hezekiah, add to his days fifteen years. Mrs. Gayer suddenly rose from her knees, and exclaimed, 'The prayer is granted!'" Dr. Crookshanks adds: "It is worthy of notice that Mr. Wesley survived from June, 1775, till March, 1791, a period of fifteen years and eight months."

December 2, 1784, he is preaching at Buntington, and says, "I wondered that I saw nothing here of a young clergyman who last year professed much love and esteem: but I soon heard that his eyes were opened to see the *decrees*. So he knows *me* no more."

John Wesley—His Wit and Humor.

Tuesday, July 13, 1784, is a somewhat comical entry. It reads:

"I went to Burnley, a place which had been tried for many years, but without effect. It seems the time was now come. High and low, rich and poor, now flocked together from all quarters; all were eager to hear except one man, who was the town-crier. He began to bawl amain, till his wife ran to him and literally stopped his noise; she seized him with one hand and clapped the other upon his mouth, so that he could not get out one word. God then began a work which I am persuaded will not soon come to an end."

She was not the only woman helper in the Gospel during and since Wesley's day. The entry for Thursday, May 20, 1742, is an amusing one, and just to this point:

"The next afternoon I stopped a little at Newport-Pagnell, and then rode on till I overtook a serious man, with whom I immediately fell into conversation. He presently gave me to know what his opinions were; therefore I said nothing to contradict them. But that did not content him; he was quite uneasy to know whether I held the doctrine of the decrees as

The Real John Wesley.

he did ; but I told him over and over, 'We had better keep to practical things, lest we should be angry at one another.' And so we did for two miles, till he caught me unawares and dragged me into the dispute before I knew where I was. He then grew warmer and warmer ; told me I was rotten at heart, and supposed I was one of John Wesley's followers. I told him, 'No ; I am John Wesley himself.' Upon which, 'as one that has unawares trodden upon a snake,' he would gladly have run away outright. But, being the better mounted of the two, I kept close to his side, and endeavored to show him his heart, till we came into the street of Northampton."

How much we would like to have seen Wesley chasing him, and enjoying the fun of pelting him with his unanswered arguments !

Busy pastors who are troubled with crankified callers may find encouragement and wisdom in the entry for Wednesday, November 3, 1742 :

"Two of those who are called *prophets* desired to speak with me. They told me they were sent from God with a message to me ; which was that very shortly I should be *born'd*

John Wesley—His Wit and Humor.

again. One of them added they would stay in the house till it was done, unless I turned them out. I answered gravely, 'I will not turn you out,' and showed them down into the society-room. It was tolerably cold, and they had neither meat nor drink; however, there they sat from morning to evening. They then went quietly away, and I have heard nothing from them since."

Michael Fenwick, one of his helpers, begged the favor of appearing in his printed journals. It was granted. Monday, July 25, 1757, reads: "I left Epworth with great satisfaction, and about one preached at Clayworth. I think none was unmoved but Michael Fenwick, who fell fast asleep under an adjoining hayrick," and thus Fenwick was committed to the immortal custody of the press. In another place he writes: "Spent an agreeable hour with Dr. S.—, the greatest genius in little things that ever fell under my notice. I really believe, were he seriously to set about it, he could invent the best mousetrap that ever was in the world." A purse-proud squire and he met on horseback in a narrow lane. "I never turn out for a fool," said the squire.

The Real John Wesley.

"I always do," said Wesley, as he turned his horse aside and let him pass.

It is said that a hackney-coach driver saw Wesley pick a gold-piece up out of the gutter. "That 's mine," cried he. "Ah, then," said Wesley, "yours had a hole in it." "Yes, sir." "But this one has n't," and so saying, he walked away with it. Doubtless some poor person was soon that much the better off because of that find.

Ready wit was a part of his skill as a letter writer. One of his preachers wrote to him, wishing to resign, "as he thought he was not in his right place." Mr. Wesley wrote:

"DEAR BROTHER,—You are not in your right place, for you are doubting when you ought to be praying. Yours truly,

"J. WESLEY."

Henry Moore says:

"We had a local preacher who went into the Church (of England). He altered his name to its equivalent in French. He wrote to Mr. Wesley to say the bishop would not ordain him until he had ceased from preaching some time, and to ask whether Mr. Wesley thought

John Wesley—His Wit and Humor.

he might with a clear conscience do so. Mr. Wesley's answer was:

“DEAR BROTHER,—You have not told me how long you are to be a dumb dog.

“Yours truly,

“JOHN WESLEY.”

These instances suffice to show that the real Wesley was not the “lamencholy” individual we at one time supposed him to have been, but the joyous, witty, humorous Christian worker. With this true picture of our founder before us, who can be surprised at the ready and consecrated wit and humor of not a few Methodist preachers? How we, who can not tell such, like to hear the really good stories with helpful points to them that drop off from unbent brows of some of the followers of Christ and of John Wesley!

CHAPTER XVII.

John Wesley and Emotionalism.

UNHOLY TEMPERS.

HEAR ye this, all you that are called Methodists! You, of all men living, are most concerned herein. You constantly speak of salvation by faith; and you are in the right for so doing. You maintain (one and all) that a man is justified by faith; without the works of the law. And you can not do otherwise, without giving up the Bible, and betraying your own souls. You insist upon it that we are saved by faith; and undoubtedly, so we are. But consider, meantime, that let us have ever so much faith, and be our faith ever so strong, it will never save us from hell, unless it now save us from all unholy tempers; from pride, passion, impatience; from all arrogance of spirit, all haughtiness and overbearing; from

John Wesley and Emotionalism.

wrath, anger, bitterness ; from discontent, murmuring, fretfulness, peevishness. We are, of all men, most inexcusable, if, having been so frequently guarded against that strong delusion, we still, while we indulge any of these tempers, bless ourselves and dream we are in the way to heaven!—JOHN WESLEY.

Methodism to the general reader, represents an emotional religion, or at least a religion in which the emotions are very largely in evidence. The typical Methodist, to many Christians outside the Methodist pale, is a demonstrative Christian. He is expected to begin his testimony with, "I feel." "Shouting Methodists" is a familiar phrase. "Hallelujah!" "Amen!" "Glory to God!" "Praise the Lord!" and such ejaculations, are regarded as the language of this kingdom.

Not a few within the Methodist fold mourn an evident decrease of demonstrativeness among modern Methodists. The difference between the coldly intellectual believer in Jesus, who demonstrates the genuineness of his faith more by righteous deeds than by fervent words, and a large number of real Methodists, is not so great as it once was. This is a cause of

The Real John Wesley.

alarm to many good and earnest souls, who tremble for the Methodist ark. The old-time revival meetings, which could be heard as well as heard of, in the neighborhood, and the old-time camp-meeting, when the woods rang with hallelujahs,—these have not entirely passed away. Many Methodists still enjoy a perspiring as well as an inspiring experience. Yet probably there are but few Methodists who would like to restore to the Hymnal:

“I rode on the sky,
Freely justified I,
Nor did envy Elijah his seat;
My soul mounted higher
In a chariot of fire,
And the moon, it was under my feet.”

They are not anxious to ride on the sky and to stand on the moon, but they are intensely anxious to have the *world* under their feet and to show the genuineness of their justification by faith by doing righteousness “even as He is righteous.” But, after this has been said, it remains that any Methodist who does not enjoy a conscious salvation is living far below his Christian and Methodist privilege.

John Wesley and Emotionalism.

“What we have felt and seen
With confidence we tell;
And publish to the sons of men
The signs infallible,”

is still a classic, and ever will be among the true followers of Christ and of Wesley; but let not any consecrated soul think he is not a true Christian or a genuine Methodist because he has not the intense emotionality which is manifest in the experiences of other devout Methodist Christians. Lydia was as truly converted as was the jailer at Philippi; but her experience was entirely different. Let not the Lydias in our Church be discouraged. The Wesleys always preached Christian assurance as the believer's privilege, but never as an absolute necessity to salvation. In his old age John Wesley wrote:

“When, fifty years ago my brother Charles and I, in the simplicity of our hearts taught the people that unless they *knew* their sins were forgiven they were under the wrath and curse of God, I marvel they did not stone us. The Methodists, I hope, know better now. We preach assurance, as we always did, as a common privilege of the children of God, but we

The Real John Wesley.

do not enforce it under pain of damnation denounced on all who enjoy it not."

To a holy man, who was discouraged because he lacked joy, John Wesley wrote, August 27, 1768:

"You never learned, either from my conversation or preaching or writings, that holiness consisted in a flow of joy; I constantly told you quite the contrary. I told you it was love—the love of God and our neighbor; the image of God stamped in the heart; the life of God in the soul of man; the mind that was in Christ, enabling us to walk as Christ also walked."

Therefore, with such Scriptural ideas as these concerning assurance of sins forgiven and Christian holiness, let no Christian be discouraged, and no Methodist Christian think himself out of harmony with the Scriptural teachings of Wesley, because he has not the same exuberant experiences which some of his brother Methodists enjoy.

As to the most remarkable demonstrations under the preaching of the early Methodists, and especially under that of John Wesley, is

John Wesley and Emotionalism.

it not written in our histories, and read and known of all? The strangest fact is, that the greatest of these phenomena occurred not under the preaching of the oratorical Whitefield, the poetic Charles Wesley, or the seraphic Fletcher, but under the preaching of John Wesley, more especially under his early preaching.

The strangeness of this arises from the fact that John Wesley was not himself a demonstrative Christian. He was not a "shouting Methodist." We have searched his writings and those of his contemporaries in vain, in order to find the contrary. He says of himself that he "goes on in an even way, being very little raised at one time, or depressed at another." He preached Christian perfection as no evangelist before him ever preached it. He enjoyed the experience which he so often urged others to attain, but we have yet to find even one instance of his professing to be in the personal enjoyment of entire sanctification. If "Profess it, or you will lose it," be true of it, John Wesley could not long have retained this blessed experience of the fully-consecrated

The Real John Wesley.

heart. His bosom friend and helper, Bradburn, calls this reticence "Wesley's modesty," and says:

"It prevented Wesley from saying much concerning his own religious feelings. In public he hardly ever spoke of the state of his own soul, but in 1781 he told me that his experience might almost, at any time, be expressed in the following lines:

‘O Thou, who camest from above,
The pure, celestial fire to impart,
Kindle a flame of sacred love
On the mean altar of my heart;
There let it for thy glory burn,
With inextinguishable blaze;
And trembling to its source return
In humble prayer and fervent praise.’”

Yet the holy fire within him flamed forth on at least one occasion. It was in his old age. It was not at a prayer-meeting, but at a social function, and it shows that the religious and the social gatherings were alike spiritual to him. A large party of friends were dining him. Grace had been offered, and the meal well begun, when Mr. Wesley suddenly laid down his knife and fork, clasped his

John Wesley and Emotionalism.

hands, and lifted up his eyes in the attitude of prayer and praise. All knives and forks were instantly dropped, and eating was suspended. Silence reigned. Then Wesley gave out and started singing :

“ And can we forget,
In tasting our meat,
The angelic food which ere long we shall eat,
When, enrolled with the blest,
In glory we rest,
And forever sit down at the heavenly feast?”

After this he again took up his knife and fork, and with the rest resumed the feast. This scene occurred in Ireland, and Wesley was then eighty-six years old. The host was Mr. (afterwards Rev.) Joseph Burgess, then quartermaster of a regiment of soldiers in Sligo barracks.

As far as we have read after them, no student of Wesley's character has claimed that in his Christian experience he was demonstrative, nor that in his preaching he was what we would now call an excitable preacher. His own religious emotions were always held under control; but his preaching did produce excitement, sometimes of the wildest kind.

The Real John Wesley.

He did stir the emotions of his hearers as no other preacher of his day could stir them. Herein is the wonder. He had not the overwhelming gifts of popular oratory that Whitefield had; he had not at command the ready tears, to make him a weeping prophet, as Whitefield and Charles Wesley both had (and the latter often more ready than the former); John Wesley himself unexcited, calm, even-minded, steadily reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, but his hearers were most intensely moved. Much greater excitement followed his preaching than that of Whitefield. For instance, at Bristol, in the earliest part of his work there, in 1739, he wrote:

“To-day our Lord answered for himself. For while I was enforcing these words, ‘Be still and know that I am God,’ he began to make bare his arm, not in a close room, neither in private, but in the open air, and before more than two thousand witnesses. One, and another, and another was struck to the earth, exceedingly trembling at the presence of his power. Others cried, with a loud and bitter cry, ‘What must we do to be saved?’ And in

John Wesley and Emotionalism.

less than an hour seven persons, wholly unknown to me till that time, were rejoicing and singing, and with all their might giving thanks to the God of their salvation. In the evening I was interrupted at Nicholas Street, almost as soon as I had begun to speak, by the cries of one who was 'pricked at the heart,' and strongly groaned for pardon and peace. Yet I went on to declare what God had already done, in proof of that important truth that he is 'not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.' Another person dropped down, close to one who was a strong assertor of the contrary doctrine. While he stood astonished at the sight, a little boy near him was seized in the same manner. A young man who stood up behind fixed his eyes on him, and sunk down himself as one dead; but soon began to roar out, and beat himself against the ground, so that six men could scarcely hold him. His name was Thomas Maxfield. Except J—n H—n, I never saw one so torn of the evil one. Meanwhile many others began to cry out to the 'Savior of all,' that he would come and help them, insomuch that all the house (and indeed all

The Real John Wesley.

the street for some space) was in an uproar. But we continued in prayer; and before ten the greater part found rest to their souls." (Journals, May 21, 1739.)

Such scenes as this are multiplied in the Journals. For those who have not access to them, Southey's chapter vii has many instances of this kind, which he calls "the paroxysms of the disease which Methodism excited." He also speaks in this same connection of "animal magnetism," and of Wesley's "intoxicated understanding." The phenomena attending Wesley's preaching were altogether too deep for Southey's philosophy. We are glad that Southey has chronicled the facts, which evidently he himself did not understand.

For some reason which we can not explain these remarkable psychical and physical results which attended John Wesley's early preaching very largely ceased as he continued his ministry. Certainly it was not because he had lost power with God, for he constantly grew stronger in God and in the power of his might. It was not because he himself grew less emotional, for we find stronger evidences of an increase of emotionality in him

John Wesley and Emotionalism.

as he grew older. One of his earliest sermons, preached at Epworth, January 11, 1736, is, "On Mourning for the Dead" (No. 135). His main idea in it is "the unprofitable and bad consequences, the sinful nature of profuse sorrowing for the dead." His own sorrow at the death of his much-loved mother and his sisters seems to have been marked by the absence of *expressed* emotionalism. Once in his old age we find him completely broken down in the pulpit, overcome by his emotions. It was at Bolton in 1788. His brother Charles had been dead about two weeks. "He attempted to give out as his second hymn the one beginning with the words, 'Come, O thou traveler unknown;' but when he came to the lines,

'My company before is gone
And I am left alone with thee,'

the bereaved old man sank beneath emotion which was uncontrollable, burst into a flood of tears, sat down in the pulpit, and hid his face with his hands. The crowded congregation well knew the cause of his speechless excitement; singing ceased; and the chapel became a Bochim. At length Wesley recovered

The Real John Wesley.

himself, rose again, and went through a service which was never forgotten by those who were present at it."

Susannah Wesley carefully trained her children to suppress their emotions. She would not tolerate demonstrativeness in the Epworth nursery. She rested not until each child had been taught "to cry softly." John Benjamin Wesley early learned and constantly practiced this art; but certain it is that he moved multitudes of others unmistakably to express their religious experiences by shouting the high praises of their God.

Concerning sentimentality and the tender passion in John Wesley, we may speak in our next, on "John Wesley as a Friend and as a Lover."

CHAPTER XVIII.

John Wesley as a Friend and as a Lover.

THE general idea that John Wesley was lacking in the warmer and more tender elements of our human nature, naturally arises from the most strenuous public life which he lived, for about fifty years, and from the lack of the deep emotional and demonstrative in his religious experiences. The corrective for this is found by turning from his public utterances to his more private letters. These are already voluminous; others are still coming to light. Some recently-discovered letters change historic statements that have been current for more than a century. The most marked feature of every newly-discovered letter or fact of John Wesley's life is, that it sheds greater luster on his already illustrious character. Biblical criticism is giving us a clearer gospel and a more beautiful Christ, notwithstanding the fears of the timid. Timid souls have feared

The Real John Wesley.

lest newly-discovered letters, especially those to women, would throw shadows across the bright character of John Wesley. The truth is, that each new discovery adds to his fame as being one of the noblest and purest of all the sons of men and a true and faithful son of God.

Next to one's private prayers, his letters to his friends reveal a man's real life and character. John Wesley had multitudes of acquaintances, and many ordinary friends; but, like all others, he had an inner circle of friends to whom he poured out his whole heart. Chief among his men friends were his brother Charles, Perronet, Fletcher, Bradburn, Whitehead, Coke, Moore, and George Whitefield, among the preachers; and Blackwell and Wolff among very many other laymen.

His women friends were many. Chief among these stand his mother and his sisters. Next came such noble women as Lady Maxwell, Selina, Countess of Huntingdon; Mary Bosanquet, who became Mrs. John Fletcher; Sarah Ryan, Peggy Dale, and Miss Ritchie, who cared for him in his last days, and wrote the fullest account of his death, signing her-

As a Friend and as a Lover.

self at the end, "E. R." All John Wesley's letters to women are such as could only be written by the son of such a mother, the brother of such sisters, and a man wholly devoted to the work of the Lord. Being so pure and transparent himself, he often wrote without customary reserve, using affectionate terms without stint. His Irish friend, Alexander Knox, who so effectively exposed the errors of Southey's "Life of Wesley," gives an instance of this in a letter to Hannah More. He tells her that, in a letter to himself, Wesley sends a message to his sister, whom Wesley addresses as "My Dear Sally Knox;" he also declares that he "loves her dearly, and shall be glad to meet her at our Lord's right hand." Mr. Knox goes on to say of him, in this same connection: "John Wesley's impressible nature inclined him to conceive such attachments, and the childlike innocence of his heart disposed him to express them with the most amiable simplicity. The gayety of his nature was so undiminished in its substance, while it was divinely disciplined in its movements, that to the latest hour of his life there was nothing innocently pleasant with which

The Real John Wesley.

he was not pleased, and nothing naturally lovely which, in its due proportion, he was not ready to love. To interesting females, especially, this affection continually showed itself: of its nature and kind, what he says of my sister gives a striking manifestation." (Knox's Remains, Vol. III, pp. 478-9. Quoted in Rigg's "The Living Wesley," p. 205.)

These words of Knox so admirably reveal Wesley's character in his correspondence with his women friends that we now say no more, only advise the reading of all John Wesley's letters to women.

The constancy of John Wesley's friendship was such that it is said that "John Wesley never forsook a friend." An instance is given in the case of William Shent, one of his preachers who had been a barber. In his old age he fell into sin and embarrassment. His friends forsook him. Whereupon Wesley wrote a letter to the Methodist society in Keighley, where William Shent lived:

"London, Jan. 11, 1779.

"I have a few questions which I desire may be proposed to the society at Keighley.

As a Friend and as a Lover.

“Who was the occasion of the Methodist preacher’s first setting foot in Leeds? William Shent.

“Who received John Nelson into his house at his first coming thither? William Shent.

“Who was it that invited me, and received me when I came? William Shent.

“Who was it that stood by me while I preached in the street, with stones flying on every side? William Shent.

“Who was it that bore the storm of persecution for the whole town, and stemmed it at the peril of his life? William Shent.

“Whose word did God bless for many years in an eminent manner? William Shent’s.

“By whom were many children now in paradise begotten in the Lord, and many now alive? William Shent.

“Who is he that is ready now to be broken up and turned into the street? William Shent.

“And does nobody care for this? William Shent fell into sin and was publicly expelled by the society; but must he be also starved? Must he, with his gray hairs, and all his children, be without a place to lay his head? Can you suffer this? O, tell it not in Gath! Where

The Real John Wesley.

is gratitude? Where is compassion? Where is Christianity? Where is humanity? Where is concern for the cause of God? Who is a wise man among you? Who is concerned for the gospel? Who has put on bowels of mercy? Let him arise and exert himself in this matter. You here all arise as one man and roll away the reproach. Let us set him on his feet once more. It may save both him and his family. But what we do let it be done quickly. I am, dear brethren, your affectionate brother,
"JOHN WESLEY."

But there were certain women, four at least, besides the one who became his wife, towards whom John Wesley had more than ordinary affection. These were, respectively, Miss Betty Kirkham, of Stanton, near Gloucester, England; Mrs. Pendarves, her neighbor and friend; Miss Sophia Christiana Hopkey, of Savannah, Georgia; and Mrs. Grace Murray, of Newcastle, England. Let us put each of these in their order, before our pen camera, and take flash-lights of them, from out the dark and distant past of more than a century and a half ago. First, look at the lover as

As a Friend and as a Lover.

when Cupid's dart first struck him. He is twenty-four years of age; he stands just five feet, six inches high; he weighs just one hundred twenty-two pounds, avoirdupois; his hair is coal black and curly; his form slight but perfectly molded; his step is firm; his face expresses the highest refinement; his eyes are piercingly brilliant; his aquiline nose shows him to be a born leader of men. He is a "Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford," a clergyman of the Church of England, a scholar of the first rank, a thoroughbred and trained English gentleman. Such a young man could not help being attractive; with such a one, it would be pardonable for any sweet-hearted girl to fall in love. But, of course, the tender passion first moved in the young man's breast. Its first object was Miss Betty Kirkham, the daughter of the clergyman at Stanton, and the sister of Wesley's college friend, Robert Kirkham, a member of the Holy Club.

Let us now look at her through the eyes of John Wesley's sister Martha, who, in a letter written to her brother, in which she playfully rebukes his tardiness in writing her, says: "When I knew that you were just returned

The Real John Wesley.

from Worcestershire, where, I suppose, you saw your Varanese [a pet name for Betty Kirkham] I then ceased to wonder at your silence, for the sight of such a woman, 'so known, so loved,' might well make you forget me. I really have myself a vast respect for her, as I must necessarily have for one that is so dear to you." When a sister writes thus of her brother's best girl, it is evident that she thinks her worthy of him, and would approve of the match. Robert Kirkham would have liked John Wesley for a brother-in-law; but it is evident that his father, the Rev. Lionel Kirkham, of Stanton, did not consent to give John Wesley his daughter. So, in this his first venture, John Wesley loved and lost. Thus endeth chapter one in the story of John Wesley, the lover.

Chapter two begins right away. Among the group of young people at Stanton were at least two other ladies—one a young widow, only twenty-eight years old, named Mrs. Pendarves, née Mary Granville, and later Mrs. Delaney, wife of an Irish dean, and her sister, Miss Anne Granville. These, with Charles Wesley, made up an interesting inner circle of

As a Friend and as a Lover.

friends, who, according to a custom of that period, corresponded under fictitious names. John Wesley was Cyrus, Charles Wesley, Araspes; Miss Betty Kirkham, Varanese; Mrs. Pendarves was Aspasia; her sister, Anne Granville, was Selima, not "Selina," as the histories wrongly say. John Wesley addresses his Betty as "My dear Varanese." The whole of this correspondence is found in "The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs. Delaney," Vol. I. Copious extracts are given in *The Wesleyan Methodist Magazine* for 1863, and in Dr. Rigg's "The Living Wesley." John Wesley's style in this correspondence is so different from all else he has written that it would greatly baffle the higher critics should they turn their attention to it; yet the outcome in this case would doubtless be that there was only one John Wesley. Certainly this correspondence, unidentified for so many years, gives us the truly human side of John Wesley, and shows him to have been a man of like passions with ourselves. Having lost his Betty, he pours his love into the ears and heart of their mutual friend, the beautiful widow Pendarves. The sympathy becomes so

The Real John Wesley.

strong that the bereaved lover attempts a transference of his affections to his sympathetic friend. George Eliot says that "hearts are caught on the rebound," and thus accounts for the speedy marriage of broken-hearted widowers. But Mrs. Pendarves did not catch the rebounding heart of John Wesley, her Cyrus. She was eminently worthy of him. Read Edmund Burke's estimate of her: "She is not only the woman of fashion in her own age, she is the highest bred woman in the world, and the woman of fashion of all ages." This was written when, afterwards, she became "one of the most attractive and stainless figures in the Court circles of the eighteenth century. She was the friend of George III and the queen, and no whisper of evil fame ever touched her name." Her "Autobiography" reveals her as "an example of the most finished type of a Christian gentlewoman." Nevertheless, we are glad she did not respond to John Wesley's love appeal until it was too late. When she renewed the correspondence, on July 2, 1734, John Wesley had gotten bravely over it, and his great life work was beginning to open out before him. He was more worthy of her than

As a Friend and as a Lover.

was the Irish dean whom she married ; but we are glad that she did not become Mrs. John Wesley, for had she, we would not now be writing this in a Methodist parsonage. Thus honorably ended chapter number two in John Wesley's love story.

The scene of chapter three is laid under Western skies. It is in Savannah, Georgia. Wesley is now a "Missioner" there. His parishioners are not to his liking. He went out to the Indians, but was detained among the English of the colony. He is now in his thirty-third year. He is as neat and attractive on this foreign shore as at Oxford and Stanton. He is a High Churchman, very high, and zealous to a fault. He is still as pure, transparent, and guileless as ever. To his own hurt he saw others there only through his own pure eyes. Here Miss Sophia Christiana Hopkey comes upon the scene. First, she appears as a devout seeker after the deep things of God, and a diligent pupil of the handsome young clergyman. It is soon evident, to others, that husband-ry is in her heart. John Wesley's illness, during which she assiduously nursed him, was to her a great occasion

The Real John Wesley.

for carrying out her well-conceived designs. Her uncle, Magistrate Causton, aided her. Her devotion, dress, and address won the affection of John Wesley, and he really loved for the third time in his life. His devoted friend, Delamotte, who had left all in London to follow his friend Wesley to the ends of the earth, if needs be, sees through the plot, warns Wesley of her and helps to get the question before the Moravians for decision; which is given against her ever becoming Mrs. Wesley. A few days after, she became Mrs. Williamson, and soon afterwards she, her husband, and her uncle, and their sympathizers, brought about a sudden change of pastors on that charge, and John Wesley returned to England, in 1738, a single man, having loved and lost for the third time; and thus the infant, Methodism, was saved from strangulation in an English colony. Tyerman, in his "Life of John Wesley," Vol. I, page 148, quotes largely from Wesley's unpublished Journal, and shows that, under March 7, 1737, he writes: "I walked with Mr. Causton to his country lot, and plainly felt that, had God given me such retirement with the companion I desired, I

As a Friend and as a Lover.

should have forgot the work for which I was born, and have set up my rest in this world." He did not then know the extent of the work for which he had been born.

Cupid's arrow went deep this time. Forty-nine years after he wrote, in reference to this event, "I remember when I read these words in the Church at Savannah, 'Son of man, behold, I take from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke,' I was pierced through as with a sword, and could not utter a word more. But our comfort is, He that made the heart can heal the heart." He also wrote to his brother Samuel at the time, who replied, "I am sorry you are disappointed in the match, because you are very unlikely to find another."

There is documentary evidence, especially in the "Colman Collection" of MSS., to prove that many of the women of the colony were of doubtful character, and that at least two of them were decidedly bad women, though married. Also, that Oglethorpe had become ensnared with at least one of them, and that John Wesley knew it from her own lips. Oglethorpe admired John Wesley, all but his "enthusiasm," as he called his deep religiousness. He

The Real John Wesley.

called him a "soaring religionist." He also so understood men as to know John Wesley's susceptibility to the charms of attractive women of purity and piety. At least one of the vile women tried to ruin John Wesley, but utterly failed, much to her own chagrin and that of her abettors. It is also clear that Oglethorpe then used Sophia Hopkey, either as his tool or willing agent, probably the former, hoping to cure Wesley of his intense religiousness, and settle him down as a married priest in the colony. This policy accounts largely for his unwillingness to allow Wesley to go to the Indians, for whose salvation he had become a missionary. Sophia Hopkey won his heart, but did not get him for a husband.

The fourth chapter in the story of John Wesley, who loved and lost at least four times, is the one which needs most careful revision in all the histories, especially in Tyerman's "John Wesley." His work is invaluable as a well-filled storehouse of materials, which every Methodist historian and Wesley biographer *must* go to for matter; but in the adjustment of his materials he is often found wanting. Perhaps nowhere does he more fully fail to do

As a Friend and as a Lover.

his characters justice than in the case of Mrs. Grace Murray, John Wesley's fourth choice for a wife. In branding her as "Wesley's flirting sweetheart," and Wesley as a "dupe," and John Bennet as a "cheat," he does them each very great injustice. Tyerman has examined a certain MS. in the British Museum. So have we. To us, and to abler critics than Tyerman or the writer, it does not appeal as it does to Tyerman. Well do we remember how carefully we handled that precious document, as we were, all the while, watched by the custodian.

"John Wesley's Account of a Love Affair" is the outside lettering on the book. Inside we read: "This book, an account of an amour of John Wesley, the chief of the Methodist sect (copied by an amanuensis), was given to me by Noah Vazeille, of Stratford, in County Essex, whose mother had been married to the said J. W., and that the verses at the latter end are, besides separate in this book, in the handwriting of the said J. W. Quod attestor Naphtaly Hart, noty. pubc., London June 4th, 1788."

From this we learn that the source of this

The Real John Wesley.

MS. is John Wesley's wife. We know that she stole many of his papers, interpolated some of them, and gave them to her friends and his enemies, to be used to John Wesley's hurt. The only part of the MS. in John Wesley's handwriting is that with the verses at the end, which is evidently simply attached to the "account," which is said to have been "copied by an amanuensis." How faithfully copied can not be told until the original shall be unearthed. It was given to Naphtaly Hart, who donated it to the Museum, by Noah Vazaille, who was altogether out of sympathy with his stepfather, John Wesley. With these facts in mind, a salt-cellar should be within easy reach of the reader of the MS. in order that he may, as needed, sprinkle a few grains here and there. Tyerman does not seem to have had this saline equipment with him that day, when he examined this MS. He obtained, as we also did, a copy of a pamphlet, printed in 1848, entitled "Narrative of a Remarkable Transaction in the Early Life of John Wesley, from an Original Manuscript, in His Own Hand Writing, Never Before Published." This is untrue, for the verses at the end of the MS., these only,

As a Friend and as a Lover.

are in John Wesley's handwriting. This pamphlet was prepared for the press by a Mr. Charles Hook, a professional copyist, an elderly man, who did much work for investigators at the Museum. With the exception of the title-page, we think he has given a verbatim copy of the MS. He omitted to state how it came to the Museum. This he ought in justice to have done, even though it may have somewhat interfered with the sale of this, now very scarce, pamphlet of fifty-three pages.

From the correspondences between the dates in the MS. and those in John Wesley's Journals, we conclude that it is in the main true; but the deductions drawn concerning Grace Murray, by Tyerman, seem to us and to others, at least unfair and prejudiced. The most valuable part of the MS. to us, just now, is Mrs. Murray's autobiographical notes. We know that she kept a diary in the early and also in the later years of her Christian life. Parts of both are still extant. Her grandson, Dr. Robert Ottiwell Gifford Bennet, has recently died in Buxton, England. He owned her diary, and promised it to the British Conference, but he died before donating it. It is hoped that his

The Real John Wesley.

kindred will yet give it, and that then the Methodist world may see her as she really was. The most authenticated unprinted data are now in the possession of Mr. Thursfield Smith, the Methodist antiquary, and in the famous "Colman Collection." The best presentation of the whole case up to this date, is given in "The Winter Number, 1902, of *The Methodist Recorder*," London. Mr. Smith "unhesitatingly condemns the narrative, and Tyerman's version as worse than worthless." We agree with him in regard to "Tyerman's Version."

From data studied we learn that Grace Norman was born in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, January 23, 1715, and thus was thirteen years younger than John Wesley. She says, "My parents feared God; but were much distracted with worldly cares and business." They seem to have been humble, but not very poor, tradespeople. All through her childhood she experienced deep religious impressions. She records them as early as at four, six, and seven years of age. Between eight and nine years of age she was "sent to the dancing school. The company here wore away, by swift degrees, whatever God had wrought in my soul." Such is

As a Friend and as a Lover.

her own testimony as to the effects of the "dancing school." "On the 13th of May, 1736, I was married to Mr. Murray; in three or four days he went to sea and stayed about ten or eleven months." Two children were born to them, one of whom died in infancy. Here, in London, she goes to hear Whitefield preach in the open air, at Blackheath. She is deeply convicted of sin under his preaching. The next Saturday she hears John Wesley for the first time, at Moorfields. She says: "When Mr. Wesley stood up, and looked round on the congregation, I fixed my eyes upon him, and felt an inexpressible conviction that he was sent of God. And when he spoke these words, 'Except a man be born again, he can not see the kingdom of God,' they went through me like a dart, and I cried out, 'Alas! what shall I do? How shall I be born again?' " She often heard him after this, and became a member of the society. When her sailor husband returned, he objected; but she kindly but firmly insisted on her religious rights until he yielded and went himself. On leaving for the voyage from which he never returned, he asked his wife to ask the prayers of her people on his behalf. The beautiful

The Real John Wesley.

young widow now becomes a willing worker among the Methodists. Later, a sickness overtakes her, and, by advice of her physician, she returns to her native Newcastle, a very hot-bed of Methodism. Here she becomes class-leader, housekeeper, nurse, and evangelist; a veritable Methodist Deaconess, before the Deaconess Movement in our Church.

All who knew her agree that the widow, Grace Murray, was a very charming woman. The depth and genuineness of her piety, and the intensity of her zeal for God and the salvation of souls was unquestionable. Everybody, save a very few official women, greatly loved her. The preachers whom she entertained, as the matron of Wesley's home in Newcastle, very greatly admired her. One, John Bennet, who was no ordinary man, or preacher, but a man of means, education, and social standing, fell in love with her. He believed that during a severe illness she had prayed and nursed him back to life and health again. He proposed to her, but she kept him off for two years. Her own words are: "For I thought that I would not marry again, though I had many offers. I was left a young widow in my bloom. This

As a Friend and as a Lover.

might have been a snare to some, but God knew I took every way I could to break the body to all abstinence. I kept all men at a distance, for the work of God in his Church was my delight. I found no desire for the creature, being happy in my dear Savior."

When Bennet, later, pressed his suit, in 1749, on their way to Leeds, he told her of a dream he had. She calls it "the most surprising dream that I ever knew." He promised to take good care of her and her son, J. Murray, and answered all her objections so far as to lead her to say: "I could not get over it. Then I said, 'If Mr. Wesley will give his consent, I will yield.' He said, 'I will write to him this night and let him know.' So on this, I partly gave him my promise." When she reached her home at Newcastle, John Wesley's letter was there. He had heard from Mr. Bennet, but "he did not say much about the matter, but requested that I would get ready to go into Ireland to settle all the bands there, as they were all young in experience. I consented to go according to the Scripture which says, 'Be obedient to those who are placed over you in the Lord, as those who must give an account.'"

The Real John Wesley.

John Wesley and she labored together in Ireland four or five months. During this time she had not heard from Bennet, and seems to have concluded that his love for her had somewhat cooled. Evidence now has come to light that some one had intercepted his letters to Ireland. On their return to England, Bristol, Kingswood, and Ludlow are visited by Grace; also Oxford and London. They set out for Lincolnshire. On the way they unexpectedly met Bennet. She says: "When we met, all seemed well, and after preaching was over I took my leave, and went to where I was to sleep; for I wanted my bed, being very tired." There seems to have been not the slightest indication of Bennet's love-making or love-renewing at this meeting. Evidently John Wesley thought the way was clear; so, the very next day, he actually proposed to her. We will let her tell the story, as she knew the most about it. She says:

"The next day we all came together, and now Mr. Wesley declared his passion for me, which he had conquered too long. For all the years that I was under his care, he behaved to me as a tender father in every respect, and I

As a Friend and as a Lover.

looked up to him and obeyed him as a father. I can say, as in the sight of God, I could have gone with him to prison or death. I traveled with him by sea and land, and was not dismayed, neither was I afraid of any danger. Notwithstanding, I blame him for concealing his affection for me as a lover. When he mentioned it to me, I was as much surprised as if the moon had dropped out of her orbit; for I thought that he would never marry. I was now between two fires, but was gone too far with Mr. Bennet to turn back. Many words passed to no purpose. Then Mr. Bennet set out for Derbyshire, and we for Newcastle.

“It was not long before Mr. Charles Wesley and Mr. Bennet came and I was then given to Mr. Bennet, and shortly after (October 3, 1749) married at St. Andrew’s Church. We were accompanied by the Rev. Charles Wesley and the Rev. G. Whitefield, and several more of our preachers, to Tear Hill, where we dined and Mr. Charles Wesley wrote a hymn for our marriage, which we sang whilst at dinner. Afterwards we left for Leeds, and thence on towards Derbyshire; but it was a month before we reached Chinley. . . .

The Real John Wesley.

After Mr. John Wesley's marriage he brought his wife into Lancashire, and my husband and I met them at Bolton-le-Moors."

A picture of the house in Chinley, where John and Grace Bennet lived, at Lee End, is in the possession of the writer, as is also a "supposed portrait of Grace Murray in her old age." The fine oil painting of her, which was known to have been in Birmingham in 1842, and which is known to have been "a beautiful picture of a beautiful woman," has been lost sight of, but may yet be discovered. Certain it is that Charles Wesley and George Whitefield did not favor Wesley's suit, but did help the cause of Bennet. Charles Wesley thought her too far below his brother in social status. The fact that she had once been "a servant" seemed to trouble him. The fact is, she was only what the English now call "lady-help" for a little while, during a financial pressure of her family, in early life. That she kept Wesley's Preachers' Home in Newcastle was not a badge of servitude, but a place of honor, such as now is that of the head of one of our Deaconess Homes, or any other Methodist institution.

As a Friend and as a Lover.

Charles Wesley's wife and daughter, later, sought hard to justify his interference; but after weighing all the evidence, we conclude that he did wrong in helping deprive his brother of the Christian lady, and intimate friend of ladies, some of whom moved in high circles, Mrs. Grace Murray.

John Wesley almost broke his heart over the matter, but found relief in writing his longest poem, which, in his own handwriting we saw in the British Museum. After writing himself into an easier state of mind, he, as was his wont, frankly forgave all concerned, and again busily went about his work. John Bennet continued to preach for him, until a change of doctrinal views led him to leave the Methodists and become an Independent, on April 3, 1752. Two years later he settled in a new Church, built for him, in Warburton, in Cheshire, where he and his wife lived with their five children until he died. For about ten years they had lived lovingly together, she constantly helping him, as she was able, in the work of the gospel ministry. For about forty-four years after this, she again lived a widow. She moved to Chapel-en-le-Firth, near Chinley,

The Real John Wesley.

where she at first lived with her husband Bennet. She again joined the Methodists. She kept open house for her old friends, the Methodist preachers, and wrought in the Methodist cause with her old-time zeal until she died in 1803. Her house, which is now two cottages, still stands. April 3, 1786, John Wesley preached there, on the invitation of Grace Bennet, whom he afterwards met. This was not his last interview with her. Concerning his last interview we will be silent and let an eye and ear witness speak.

Says Henry Moore, in his "Life of John Wesley," (first English edition, Vol. II, p. 171): "In the year 1788, the son of Mr. Bennet, already mentioned, officiated at a chapel on the pavement in Moorfields, and his mother came to London that year on a visit to him. Mr. Thomas Olivers, having seen her, mentioned the circumstance to Mr. Wesley when I was with him, and intimated that Mrs. Bennet wished to see him. Mr. Wesley, with evident feeling, resolved to visit her; and the next morning he took me with him to Colebrooke-row, where her son then resided. The meeting was affecting; but Mr. Wesley pre-

As a Friend and as a Lover.

served more than his usual self-possession. It was easy to see, notwithstanding the many years which had intervened, that, both in sweetness of spirit and in person and manners, she was a fit subject for the tender regrets expressed in those verses which I have presented to the reader. The interview did not continue long, and I do not remember that I ever heard Mr. Wesley mention her name afterward." With this realistic picture of two old lovers, we will take our leave of Grace Murray, John Wesley's fourth lady-love, who ought to have become Mrs. John Wesley, instead of Mrs. John Bennet, in October, 1749. We doubt that Wesley, the Lincolnshire preacher, could have adopted the words of the later Lincolnshire poet, Tennyson, when he wrote:

"T 'is better to have loved and lost,
Than never have loved at all."

CHAPTER XIX.

John Wesley and His Wife.

IN an old English newspaper, *The Bristol Weekly Intelligencer*, some numbers of which, from 1749 to 1751, have recently been found, there is an item of peculiar interest to Methodists. It reads: "Last week was married the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, Methodist preacher, by his brother, the Rev. Mr. Charles Wesley, to a merchant's widow, in Threadneedle Street, of great beauty, merit, and every endowment necessary to render the marriage state happy, with a jointure of £300 per annum." The date of the issue which contains this is "March 2, 1750-1." This statement that Charles Wesley performed the ceremony is a revelation to Methodist historians. For at least several weeks Mr. Wesley had been reconsidering the question of marrying. He had consulted his

John Wesley and His Wife.

nearest and dearest man friend, the Rev. Mr. Perronet, and in his journal for February 1, 1751, he writes:

“Sat. 2.—Having received a full answer from Mr. P., I was clearly convinced that I ought to marry. For many years I remained single because I believed I could be more useful in a single than in a married state. And I praise God who enabled me to do so. I now as fully believe that, in my present circumstances, I might be more useful in a married state; into which, upon this clear conviction, and by the advice of my friends, I entered a few days after.”

The very next entry is peculiarly Wesleyan:

“Wed. 6.—I met the single men, and showed them on how many accounts it was good for those who had received that gift from God, to remain ‘single for the kingdom of heaven’s sake;’ unless where a particular case might be an exception to the general rule.”

On the day of his decision, John told his brother Charles that he was resolved to marry. “I was thunderstruck,” Charles says, “and could only answer, he had given me the first blow, and his marriage would come like the

The Real John Wesley.

coup de grace (finishing stroke). Trusty Ned Perronet followed and told me the person was Mrs. Vazeille! one of whom I had never had the least suspicion. I refused his company to the chapel, and retired to mourn with my faithful Sally. I groaned all the day, and several following ones, under my own and the people's burden. I could eat no pleasant food, nor preach, nor rest, either by night or by day."

Why did he feel so badly at this news? We conclude it was not because of the prospective bride, because he had these feelings before Perronet told him her name, but because he feared for the cause in which his brother was constantly itinerating, and for which he himself had, since his own marriage, largely ceased to itinerate. This, we think, is what he meant by his "own and the people's burden." However, just sixteen days later, Charles seems to have so far gotten over his troubling as to marry his brother John, at Wandsworth, February 18, 1751. We hope that the unpublished Journals of both John and Charles Wesley will yet give us more details of this wedding. Both brothers seem

John Wesley and His Wife.

reticent on the fact. If they were not, the compilers of their Journals certainly were. Charles gives one item for the Sunday after the wedding, that Mr. Blackwell, John's great banker friend, fell upon him "in a manner peculiar to himself, and dragged him to his dear sister." "Some weeks after he called upon Mrs. John Wesley, kissed her, and assured her that he was perfectly reconciled to her and to his brother. He took his wife to see her, and lost no opportunity of showing his respect and love."

On Sunday, February 10, 1751, just eight days after he had resolved to marry, John Wesley, as usual, had a busy day. At 5 A. M. he preached at the Foundry, then off to Snows-fields, on the Surrey side of London, where he had an appointment to preach. Of this morning he writes: "When, in the middle of London Bridge, both my feet slipped on the ice, and I fell with great force, the bone of my ankle lighting on the top of a stone. However, I got on, with some help, to the chapel, being resolved not to disappoint the people. After preaching, I had my leg bound up by a surgeon, and made a shift to walk to the Seven

The Real John Wesley.

Dials. It was with much difficulty that I got up into the pulpit; but God there comforted many of our hearts. I went back in a coach to Mr. B—'s [Blackwell's], and from thence in a chair to the Foundry; but I was not able to preach, my sprain growing worse. I removed to Threadneedle Street; where I spent the remainder of the week, partly in prayer, reading, and conversation, partly in writing an Hebrew grammar and 'Lessons for Children.'” Doubtless the conversation of that week had its consummation in the wedding which occurred the following Monday, February 18, 1751. The bridegroom must have been very lame that day, for on the day before he had to be carried to the Foundry, “and preached kneeling, my heart being enlarged, and my mouth opened to declare the wonders of God's love.” On his wedding-day he says he “was not able to set his foot to the ground.” That week of wooing and Hebrew grammar writing was an eventful one to John Wesley. Perhaps if he had paid less attention to the Hebrew and more to the wooing, the result would have been better. But, we have known students of Hebrew grammar who would have

John Wesley and His Wife.

done better work if they had postponed their wooing until they had mastered their Hebrew and other studies.

Who was Mrs. Vazeille, who became Mrs. John Wesley? New data having recently come to light, we now, for the first time, attempt briefly to portray her life and character, from facts in hand. The first glimpse we get from facts in hand. She was the daughter of a London merchant named Goldhawk. The first glimpse we get of her is under date of "half an hour after 8, Wednesday, 19th December, 1744." She is then the wife of Mr. Anthony Vazeille, and lived "over against the French Boarding School, Love Lane, in Wandsworth, Surrey." This is the address on a letter from her husband, from which this quotation is taken. It sends "one hundred kisses to the children," and tells his wife, "Don't keep the hare for me, for it would spoil, for it came from Yorkshire. Denison sent it; eat it, and drink a glass of wine to my health." These are the words of the wealthy and happy Mr. Vazeille to his equally happy wife, in 1744. The death of Mr. Vazeille proved to be the greatest calam-

The Real John Wesley.

ity that ever befell John Wesley. The happy couple had lived in "Love Lane." It was situated at a dangerous corner. Two slabs used to be on the wall; on one of them was written, "Love Lane;" on the other slab, "Drive slowly round this corner." Whether or not she retained this Surrey residence, as well as that in Threadneedle Street, in February, 1751, after the death of Mr. Vazeille, and John Wesley's memorable week at her home, we do not know. If Wesley ever visited her at the Surrey Side home, he would have done well to have heeded the advice posted on "Love Lane," "Drive slowly round this corner." Mr. Anthony Vazeille needed not this advice, for his wife seems to have been in every respect a helpmeet for him. O that he had lived to a good old age! Dying, he left his widow with four children and a fortune of £10,000, which money John Wesley insisted on securing to herself and her children before he married her. One of her daughters became a Newcastle Methodist, and the wife of Mr. William Smith. Of their two daughters, Mary became the wife of the Rev. John Stamp, Methodist preacher; the other

John Wesley and His Wife.

was married to Christopher Sundius, Esq., a London merchant. John Wesley loved them dearly, and called them his "dear granddaughters," and remembered them in his will.

The next glimpse of Widow Vazeille we get is in 1749, when Charles Wesley is introduced to her, "at Ned Perronet's." He then spoke of her as "a woman of a sorrowful spirit." She seems to have been an attendant at the Methodist meetings, and interested religiously. In May, 1750, Charles took her with him on a visit to Ludlow to the Gwynne family. He says, "During our nine days' stay they showed her all the civility that they could, and she seemed equally pleased with them." Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wesley then set out with her for a nine days' visit to her London home. They take in Evesham, Blenheim, and Oxford, where Charles shows her around the colleges, on their way to the Vazeille home. He then had not the remotest idea that she would become his sister-in-law, and that in less than one year.

When John Wesley was introduced to her, and by whom, we have not learned. Probably Mr. Perronet, with whom she seems to

The Real John Wesley.

have been intimate, first brought them together. Certain it is that he advised the marriage. The thirty years and eight months of John Wesley's married life were mostly years of great trial and sore affliction. If ever the saying, "If you marry in haste you will repent at leisure," was true, it was in the case of John Wesley. From February 18, 1751, to October 8, 1781, when his wife died, was to him a time of great tribulation, and to her by no means a time of marital bliss. That their married life began well may be learned from the following letter, one of three which have recently come into the possession of the British Conference. It is dated about five weeks after their marriage. Perhaps we can not do better than here insert these three letters and thus let John Wesley speak for himself in March 27, 1751, December 23, 1758, and in September 1, 1777. The following are the letters:—

"Tetsworth

"42 miles from London

March 27, 1751.

"My Dear Molly, Do I write too Soon?
Have not *You*, above all the People in the

John Wesley and His Wife.

World, a Right to hear from me, as soon as possibly I can? You have Surely a Right to every Proof of Love I can give, and to all the little Help which is in my Power. For you have given me, even your own Self. O how can we praise God enough, for making us Helps meet for each other! I am utterly astonished at his Goodness. Let not only our Lips but our Lives shew forth his Praise!

“Will you be so kind, as to send word to T. Butts, That Mr. Williams of Bristol will draw upon him in a few days, for Twenty Pounds, (w^{ch} I paid R^d Thyer in full)? And that he may call upon you for the money?

“If you have still a desire to make your Will, Bro: Briggs can write it for you. It require’s no Form of Law, no, nor even Stamp Paper. But if you apprehend any Difficulty, Mr. l’Anson will rejoice to advise you, either for my sake or your own.

“My Dear, forward the business with Mr Blisson, & the stating the Accounts by Mr Crook, as much as possible. But O! let no Business of any kind, hinder the Intercourse between God and your Soul. Neither let any thing prevent your spending at least One

The Real John Wesley.

Hour a day, in Private Reading, Prayer & Meditation.

"To hear You do this constant'y, will give a particular Satisfaction, to him who blesses God that he is

"Ever Your's

"If any Letter come's to You, directed to y^e Rev^d Mr. John Wesley, open it: It is for yourself

"Dear Love, Adieu!"

Endorsed

"To

"M^{rs} Wesley,

"In Threadneedle Street,

"London."

The second Letter, dated December 23, 1758, we reproduce in fac-simile, and the writing is so clear that there is no occasion to reproduce it also in type.

The third Letter is as follows:

"Sept^r 1, 1777.

"My Dear,

"I sincerely wish a reunion with you if it cou'd be upon Good terms. Otherwise it

John Wesley and His Wife.

w^d not continue: And then y^e last error w^d be worse than the first. But what are those terms on w^{ch} it probably wou'd continue? In order to know, we must state y^e case; w^{ch} I will do as briefly as I can, leaving out all unnecessary Circumstances.

"Some years since, without my Consent or Knowledge, you left me & settled at Newcastle.

"I received you again, without any terms, nay, without any Acknowledgm^t y^t you had done wrong.

"Two years ago, You left me again, without my Consent or Knowledge. A few days since I met you & (to my great surprize) you seemed willing to return. I was willing to receive you upon these terms, 1. Restore my Papers. 2. Promise to take no more.

"But upon reflection I see I was too hasty. For you have given Copies of my Papers, and these you can not recall. Likewise you have spoken all manner of evil against me, particularly to my Enemies, & y^e Enemies of y^e Cause I live to support. Hereby many bad men have triumphed, and been confirmed in their evil ways: And many good, but weak men have been stumbled; and some have drawn

The Real John Wesley.

back to perdition. A sword has been put into y^e hands of y^e Enemies of God, and y^e Children of God have been armed against one another.

“Things standing thus, if I was to receive you just now, without any Acknowledgment or reparation of these wrongs, it w^d be esteemed by all reasonable men, a Confirmation of all you have said.

“But it may be asked, ‘What reparation are you either able or willing to make?’”

“I know not, if you are willing to make any: If you are what reparation are you able to make? Very little indeed: for the water is spilt, and cannot be gathered up again.

“All you can do now, if you are ever so willing, is to Unsay what you have said. For instance: You have said over and over that I have lived in Adultery these twenty years. Do you believe this or do you not? If you do, how can you think of living with such a Monster? If you do not, give it me under your hand? Is not this the least that you can do?”

From these three letters, and others of this period of John Wesley’s married life, we can

John Wesley and His Wife.

not but conclude that John Wesley was in every respect an affectionate and faithful husband, who loved his wife only less than he loved his Lord and Master, and the work to which God had called him. Before he married her he "stipulated that he should not be obliged to preach one sermon or to travel one mile less than he had been accustomed to do." "If I thought it would be otherwise," said Wesley to the lady herself, "much as I love you, I would see your face no more." (Moore, *Life of Wesley*, Vol. II, p. 173.)

She did not keep her part of the contract. He kept his. We gladly admit it would be hard for any wife to give up the company of her husband so often and for so long as Mr. Wesley's work required. But she knew his manner of life, and his purpose to continue it, before she entered into the contract. We yield that the change of wedded life from being the wife of a convivial merchant to that of a Methodist itinerant, was great ; but doubtless she had professed a change of heart and a sympathy with his work before Wesley proposed to her. Probably he was not so attentive to her domestic and social wants as her merchant husband

The Real John Wesley.

had been; but his many duties as a leader of a great religious host forbade him, even had he been gifted that way. Time was more than money, it was more than life to him; it was salvation, and that not of a few, to him. Of learned, or any other kind of leisure, he had none. His was the strenuous life indeed; evidently she could not understand him or his work. Being uneducated, she could not enter into his literary work. Having been used all her married life to business matters, she could not easily pass from the secular into the sacred things of the ministry of the gospel. Even admitting that Wesley, being forty-eight years of age at marriage, had not the enthusiasm usually found in a groom of twenty-five years, and also that, being a born leader, he doubtless tried to lead her into his ways of living, which she may have mistaken for ruling her. Conceding that, to his pure and noble woman friends and helpers in the gospel, he used familiarity of address, which a narrow-minded wife might object to,—these things did not justify her in using personal violence upon him, by tearing out his hair by the handful, and otherwise ill-treating him. She was jeal-

John Wesley and His Wife.

ous of him; made public his private letters; interpolated them to satisfy her own evil heart and purpose to ruin him; and tried to blacken his character by accusing him of the vilest sins, as these letters now in evidence clearly show. She left him at will, and returned to him at will, for about twenty years, when she seems to have left him for good and all. It was then he wrote in his Journal for Wednesday, January 23, 1771: "For what cause I know not to this day,— — set out for Newcastle, purposing never to return. *Non eam reliqui; non dismissi; non revocabo.* (I did not desert her; I did not send her away; I will not recall her.)" From the letter of September 1, 1777, we learn that he did receive her again, "without any terms," etc. But two years before that writing—that is, in 1775—"you left me again without my consent or knowledge." She died October 8, 1781, aged seventy-one. Her mortal remains were buried in the parish churchyard of Camberwell, London, on October 12th. Changes have brought her grave under the sidewalk, so that multitudes of busy feet walk above them day by day. On Friday, October 12, 1781, Wesley

The Real John Wesley.

writes: "I came to London, and was informed that my wife died on Monday. This evening she was buried, though I was not informed of it till a day or two after." To write such things about any woman is no more pleasant than it is to read them; but no just estimate of the character of John Wesley can be reached without an unprejudiced investigation of all available data on the subject. The "clerk of the works" at the restoration of Wesley's chapel told me that he thought Wesley a success as an evangelist, but a failure as a husband. A good story was told of Rev. W. L. Watkinson, D. D., when president of the Wesleyan Conference at Plymouth. Some time ago he was staying with a good lady who was yearning for the good old times, and mourning the degeneracy of modern Wesleyan ministers. On being asked for the grounds of her jeremiad, she said that Wesleyan ministers of the earlier part of this century rose early in the morning, and that dear Mr. Wesley was in his study at four o'clock in the morning. "It is not to be wondered at," was Mr. Watkinson's dry reply; "were Mrs. Watkinson anything like Mrs. Wesley, I should be up at *two* o'clock." Some

John Wesley and His Wife.

one has well said, "He married a widow, and caught a tartar." Henry Moore, the intimate friend and biographer of John Wesley, says: "He repeatedly told me that he believed the Lord overruled this painful business for his good; and that if Mrs. Wesley had been a better wife he might have been unfaithful in the great work to which God had called him, and might have too much sought to please her according to her own views."

CHAPTER XX.

John Wesley, Author.

We gather up, with pious care,
What happy saints have left behind ;
Their writings in our memory bear,
Their sayings on our faithful mind ;
Their works, which traced them to the skies,
As patterns to ourselves we take ;
And dearly love and highly prize
The mantle, for the wearer's sake.

—Charles Wesley.

METHODISM has not been such a literary Church as is the Church of England. A glance at the libraries of any dozen educated ministers will at once show how dependent we are upon John Wesley's old Church for many of our very best books. She has been largely the Church of the pen and the cloister ; Methodism has been the Church of the tongue and the field. Yet her literary products have not been few, nor unimportant. They are greatly in-

John Wesley, Author.

creasing in quantity and in quality. Like the American nation, we have been too busy, as yet, to forge to the forefront of the literary lines.

No one would claim that John Wesley was one of the greatest of English writers, from the literary view-point. What he might have been had he set himself the task, is another question; ours is, as to what he really was. His preface to his first volume of sermons gives the reason for this. In it he says. "Nothing here appears in an elaborate, elegant, or oratorical address. If it had been my desire or design to write thus, my leisure would not permit. But, in truth, I at present designed nothing less; for I now write (as I generally speak) *ad populum*: to the bulk of mankind. . . . I mention this that curious readers may spare themselves the labor of seeking for what they will not find." Those who search for brilliant rhetoric in Wesley's writings will search in vain. In this he was the opposite of Blair.

John Wesley did not write for the learned. His "Earnest Appeals to Men of Reason and Religion" is his chief effort in that direction.

The Real John Wesley.

Their linked logic and sustained appeals to mind and conscience and their by no means poor rhetoric, show us what he might have done in that direction. Many critics give these "Appeals" the highest place in the John Wesley literature, when judging from purely literary standards. They fill two hundred and thirty-eight closely-printed pages, and were mighty in dispelling the doubts of very many thinking men and women of Wesley's day.

His most elaborate work on dogmatic theology is "The Doctrine of Original Sin: According to Scripture, Reason, and Experience" (Bristol, MDCCLVII). This work of 522 pages shows what he might have done had he set himself to write a book on Systematic Theology. We are glad he did not do this. His more than a half a century work in practical theology did more for the world than any "Body of Divinity" could possibly have done. A theologian he was, but his theology was of the clarifying kind. Other theologians filled the minds of their students; John Wesley clarified them. His greatest controversy was with the Calvinism of his day. The late Professor Austin Phelps, D. D., in the *Congrega-*

John Wesley, Author.

tionalist, in 1886, well described Wesley's attitude towards Calvinism, saying:

"Wesley and his associates denied the limitations of the atoning sacrifice by divine decree. They did it in no obscure or silken speech. They denounced the dogma with vehemence and scorn. They defined it as an invention of the devil. Indeed, throughout the controversy with Calvinism, Wesley was a savage. He spared neither foe nor friend, not even Whitefield. He gave us the iron hand bare of the velvet glove. But his unkempt ferocity of method achieved its object. It said what he meant, and hewed the way clean to the liberty of proclaiming a free salvation."

On the doctrines of free and full salvation, and of a "Know-so" religion, John Wesley's pen-point punctured the hide-bound theology of his day. His eight volumes of sermons which he bequeathed to every one of his preachers, "who shall remain in the Connection six months after my decease, as a little token of my love," together with his notes on the New Testament, are no mean treatises on exegetical and dogmatic theology. As far as they go, they are better than the best of their

The Real John Wesley.

times, and will be useful in all times. We wonder not that they were set as the standards of doctrine for the Methodists. Wesley the Theologian will be no mean figure in history. We have often wished that he had felt called to review and rewrite all his writings on the doctrine of entire sanctification. It would have saved much confusion and controversy in these modern days. More than seventy of his publications are on divinity and devotion.

If John Wesley was not a great writer, he certainly was a voluminous one, and is not this the real reason why he was not great, from the literary view-point? "Let me be a man of one book," he wrote. He also said to one of his preachers who boasted that he read only one book, the Bible: "If a man read only his Bible he would soon cease to read that." This "man of one book" was an omnivorous reader, and a wholesale writer of books. But they all were read and published to shed light upon the "one book" of which he speaks. By the aid of "Wesley Bibliography," by the Rev. Richard Green, which is a monument of painstaking labor, we can now approximate the number of publications issued by the Wesleys, their

John Wesley, Author.

dates, and characteristics. Dr. Osborne did well in his "Record of Methodist Literature," but no up-to-date student of Wesley can do without Green's invaluable volume. From it we learn that the number published jointly by John and Charles Wesley was four hundred and fifty-three separate issues, none of which were duplicates. Of these, John Wesley himself issued three hundred and forty-one publications, ranging in size from a four-paged tract to his Commentary on the Old Testament in its three bulky folios. This reckoning regards each separate volume of "The Christian Library" in fifty volumes, and each of the thirteen volumes of what Percival Bunting calls "The Westminster Abbey of Methodism," the *Arminian Magazine*, begun in 1778, and still issued monthly. It is said to be the oldest religious magazine extant.

Please do not ask how or when he ever found time and strength to prepare these four hundred and three volumes, for no man knoweth, but he issued them. Of these two hundred and thirty-three are original works by John Wesley; one hundred and sixty-two are extracted or edited by him; eight are works

The Real John Wesley.

for which he wrote a preface or notes only. In addition to these four hundred and three assigned to John Wesley, there are thirty works in which the brothers shared, or of which it can not be decided whether they were prepared by John or by Charles Wesley. Nearly every one of these is owned by the Rev. Richard Green, late of Didsbury College, England, who once kindly showed them to us. "The New Testament With an Analysis of the Several Books and Chapters," 1790, which was the last important work he issued, is a little gem for pocket use. It is a revised translation. It has his latest corrections, his ripest study of versions, and is not exactly the same as his "Notes." It is now very rarely to be seen. In historical theology we have his Ecclesiastical History in four volumes. In the fourth is his "A Short History of the People Called Methodists," which is the first history of Methodism, and is written by its founder. His "Concise History of England from the Earliest Times to the Death of George II," is in four volumes of the same size as his Ecclesiastical History. "A Short Roman History," another 12mo volume from his busy pen, completes

John Wesley, Author.

his line of histories, because "The History of Henry, Earl of Moreland," in two volumes, is really the novel which he abridged from the four-volume edition of its author, Mr. Brooke, who entitled it "The Fool of Quality." Concerning it, and novel-reading generally, Wesley writes: "I would recommend very few novels to young persons for fear they should be too desirous of more. Mr. Brooke wrote one more (besides the Earl of Moreland), 'The History of the Human Heart.' I think it well worth reading though it is not equal to his former production. The want of novels may be supplied by well-chosen histories." (See letter to Miss Bishop, in Works, XIII, page 137). The only other work of fiction we find is "The Pilgrim's Progress from this World to that Which is to Come. Abridg'd by John Wesley, M. A., &c." This little book of fifty-one pages was never considered a great success. "Wesley's Philosophy" is in five volumes. Its full title is, "A Survey of the Wisdom of God in Creation; or, a Compendium of Natural Philosophy, in five volumes." He announced it as forthcoming in two volumes. He then added a third, which then completed the work,

The Real John Wesley.

as shown by his first edition ; but it so grew in his thought that he issued a second edition, expanded into five volumes. It ran through six editions unaltered. In 1835, a new edition, "adapted to the present state of science," was issued. The author's own idea of this work is seen by an extract from a letter to the assistants: "I will beg you, with all possible diligence, to procure subscriptions for the Philosophy. Spare no pains. It will be the most complete thing of its kind of any in the English tongue. But it is well if I procure as many subscribers as will pay the expense of the edition." These last words show Wesley's motives in publishing books ; it was not to make money, but to do good. This it was that made him bold to call attention to the good qualities in his writings. The most striking instance of this we find in the "Address to the Reader," of "The Complete English Dictionary, Explaining Most of Those Hard Words Which are found in the Best English Writers." It is a 12mo of 144 pages. He begins by saying: "As incredible as it may appear, I must avow, that this Dictionary is not published to get money, but to assist per-

John Wesley, Author.

sons of common sense and no learning, to understand the best English authors; and that, with as little expense of either time or money as the nature of the thing would allow." He then makes bold to say: "I add, that this little dictionary is not only the shortest and the cheapest, but likewise, by many degrees, the most correct which is extant at this day. Many are the mistakes in all the other English dictionaries which I have yet seen, whereas I can truly say I know of none in this; and I conceive the reader will believe me; for if I had, I should not have left it there. Use, then, this help till you find a better. Oct., 1753." His definition of a Methodist is, "one that lives according to the method laid down in the Bible." This is a good enough definition.

He issued respectively short English, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and French Grammars, and at least eight Latin text-books for his Kingswood School, besides other English text-books; such as "A Compendium of Logick," and "Directions in Pronunciation and Gesture." Knowing the need of a sound body for the mind to live in, and operate through, he pre-

The Real John Wesley.

pared books on health topics ; such as "Cadogan on Gout," "Advices With Respect to Health. Extracted from a late Author" (Dr. Tissot), and his own "Primitive Physick ; or, An Easy and Natural Method of Curing Most Diseases." This went through twenty-three editions during his life. The thirty-second edition came out in 1828. Some of the remedies in this curious treatise are marked "tried ;" some are marked "I," which stands for infallible. Two hundred and forty-three diseases are prescribed for by seven hundred and twenty-five recipes. Much fun has been made of many of these prescriptions ; but, doubtless, the book brought back health, and saved many lives in hundreds of the homes of England's poor, in Wesley's day.

John Wesley may almost be called the inventor of tracts. His was an age of bulk in literature. Wesley's publications were marvels of condensation. He anticipated the telegram, postal card, and the pilule by his tract and little-volume literature. The four-paged tract, the penny hymn sheet, the short printed sermon were new things in literature in his day, or at least they were very uncommon.

John Wesley, Author.

Wesley's volumes very seldom exceeded the duodecimo, which is so familiar to all collectors of Wesley literature. He believed in the democracy of learning, and scattered broadcast his little leaves for the teaching and healing of the people. Bishop Gilbert Haven used to head his articles, "Feathers from a Flying Wing." Nearly all of Wesley's works were prepared in the saddle, and in his carriage. He rested only long enough to finish preparing them for the press. Before they came off the press, he was off again and had no chance to correct them; hence so many errata in his volumes. His was an itinerant pen. In 1771-4 he collected all his Works, excepting his commentaries, philosophy, the Christian Library, and the text-books, into thirty-two volumes. These, with "The Christian Library," in fifty volumes, on which he lost £200, four quarto volumes of commentaries, five volumes of Philosophy, and all the text-books made quite a large library issued by one man from 1733, when he made his first literary venture in "A Collection of Forms of Prayer for Every Day in the Week," which was followed in the next year, 1734, by "A Treatise

The Real John Wesley.

on Christian Prudence;" and the next year, 1735, by "The Christian Pattern; or, A Treatise of the Imitation of Christ. Written originally in Latin by Thomas à Kempis." From 1733 to 1774 he had produced this amazing amount of literary matter. The Rev. Dr. John Goucher owns Wesley's own marked copy of Thomas à Kempis. We are glad it is on this side of the ocean.

At least three musical works were issued by him: "A Collection of Tunes Sung at the Foundry," "Sacred Harmony," and "Sacred Melody," besides, "Sounds of Vocal Music." Twenty-four hymns, translated by him from the German, and several original hymns from his pen, show him to have been a poet indeed, as well as a preacher. The brothers agreed to issue their hymn-books conjointly, so it is difficult to ascertain the actual number written exclusively by John; but "The Pilgrim," written in 1747, and a part of which is number 1078, in the Hymnal of the Methodist Episcopal Church, is surely John Wesley's own autobiography down to that date. Five stanzas of the original are omitted from the Hymnal, which gives only the first two, and

John Wesley, Author.

the last two. The English Methodist Hymn-Book has, ever since the edition of 1751, the year in which John Wesley was married, had eight of the original nine stanzas. The omitted stanza, found only in the editions before 1751, was:

“I have no sharer of my heart,
To rob my Savior of a part,
And desecrate the whole;
Only betrothed to Christ am I,
And wait his coming from the sky,
To wed my happy soul.”

Had John Wesley been able to retain this stanza until his death in 1791, he would have had about thirty happier years of life to record. Not only did his wife spoil the hymn, but she marred his happiness, and also, to some extent, his usefulness, during that period.

In these glimpses and glances of John Wesley as an author, we have left until the last what is by no means the least of his works, his “Journals.” These we personally regard as the greatest literary productions of his pen. They are certainly the most original of all his writings. He got the idea in 1725, from Jeremy Taylor. Wesley’s habit was to write

The Real John Wesley.

a record of each hour of the day. His memorandum-books were ruled for each hour, and usually had entries for each. The printed Journals are merely extracts from these pocket journals. Bishop Hendrix owns the very one he carried in his pocket in Georgia; others are coming to light, and an effort is now being made to print more extracts from these wonderful chronicles. The first printed Journal appeared, undated, in 1738 or 1739. The whole cover the period between the two Octobers of 1735 and 1790. "Between those two Octobers there lies the most amazing record of human exertion ever penned or endured," writes that brilliant essayist, Augustine Birrell, who also says:

"If you want to get into the last century, [that is, the eighteenth century] to feel its pulses throb beneath your finger, be content sometimes to leave the letters of Horace Walpole unturned; resist the drowsy temptation to waste your time over the learned triflers who sleep in the seventeen volumes of Nichols; nay, even deny yourself your annual reading of Boswell or your biennial retreat with Sterne; and ride up and down the country

John Wesley, Author.

with the greatest force of the eighteenth century in England. No man lived nearer the center than John Wesley; neither Clive nor Pitt, neither Mansfield nor Johnson. You can not cut him out of our national life. No single figure influenced so many minds, no single voice touched so many hearts. No other man did such a life's work for England. As a writer he has not achieved distinction; he was no Athanasius, no Augustine; he was ever a preacher and an organizer, a laborer in the service of humanity; but happily for us his Journals remain, and from them we can learn better than from anywhere else what manner of man he was, and the character of the century in which he lived."

Mr. Gladstone was, and Lord Rosebery is, of the opinion that "there is scarcely any literary production of the eighteenth century more highly regarded in the best literary circles than the Journals of John Wesley." A Glasgow student of the Free Church College said, the other day, that he was of the opinion that Professor Denney quoted more from John Wesley's works than from those of any other man. Professor Moule, of Cambridge, has

The Real John Wesley.

recently been lecturing to his students on John Wesley's Journals. With one more tribute we will close this rapid survey of John Wesley, author. Dr. Robertson Nicholl, in his recent missionary sermon at Great Queen Street, London, paid a tribute which will long be remembered to the value of Wesley's Journals. He said:

"There is no book, I humbly think, in all the world like John Wesley's Journal. It is pre-eminently the book of the resurrection life lived in this world. It has very few companions. Indeed, it stands out solitary in all Christian literature, clear, detached, columnar. It is a tree that is ever green before the Lord. It tells us of a heart that kept to the last its innocent pleasures and interests, but held them all so loosely, so lightly, while its Christian and passionate peace grew and grew to the end."

SMALL CLEWS TO THE GREAT MAZE.

A comparatively few of John Wesley's publications were his original writings. The Journals, Sermons, Appeals, and a good part

John Wesley, Author.

of his work on "Original Sin," are original, as are several of the hymns that bear his name. He did not claim originality for his publications. His chief idea was to prepare for the people that which he thought would do them good. Usefulness, not originality, was his motto. Once he had to pay Dodsley, the publisher, fifty pounds in compensation for a piracy of which he had unwittingly been guilty. This was in 1744, in his "Collection of Moral and Sacred Poems from the Most Celebrated English Authors." He nobly apologized, and honorably paid damages, and was more careful afterwards. A comparison of his Notes on the Old Testament, with Poole's Annotations, and Matthew Henry's Commentary, and his Notes on the New Testament, with Bengel's Gnomon, Dr. Guyse's Paraphrase, and Doddridge's Family Expositor, will show that his originality consisted largely in wise selection and abbreviation. He did not sail under false colors, but frequently declared the unoriginality of his works. A specimen page, showing how he went through a volume, condensing, correcting, and clarifying it, is given

The Real John Wesley.

in "The Homes and Haunts of John Wesley," at page 116.

All his books save those just mentioned are small. ("Μεγα βιβλίον μεγα κακόν,") "A great book is a great evil," was one of his sayings. He often said to Henry Moore, his friend and biographer, "Ah, Henry, if angels were authors, we should have but few folios." "Yes," said Moore, "it's all served up, an oyster at a time now, sir." The way he boiled down great folios and served their contents up in tempting duodecimos is marvelous. His introduction to his "Christian Library" of fifty volumes, on which he lost two hundred pounds sterling, shows his plans for condensation. These fifty volumes came out from 1749-55.

The greatest clew to this great maze is his own statement. "It is true I travel four or five thousand miles in a year. But I generally travel alone in my carriage"—this was written in his later years, when he had ceased riding on horseback, where he then did his reading—"and consequently am as retired ten hours in a day as if I was in a wilderness. Other days I never spend less than three hours (fre-

John Wesley, Author.

quently ten or twelve) in the day alone. So there are few persons in the Kingdom who spend so many hours secluded from all company." He was a miser of moments. Yet, with these small clews, it is still amazing how ever he could find the time to write so much.

CHAPTER XXI.

Earliest and Later Biographies of John Wesley.

IN a goodly row on one of my "Wesleyana" shelves, stand eighteen standard biographies of John Wesley. Some of these are very rare. The bicentennial of John Wesley's birth leads us to take them down and re-examine them. We also feel prompted to show them to you.

The first in the row is the earliest we have ever seen or heard of. So rare is it that it is not even mentioned in the list of that greatest of all Wesley bibliographers, the Rev. Richard Green's "Wesley's Life in Literature." We naturally infer that even he had not seen a copy. It is entitled "The Methodist: Attempted in Plain Metre. Nottingham: Printed by the Author. At G. Burbage's Office on the Long-Row. MDCCLXXX." It is a book

Earliest and Later Biographies.

of 134 pages; size, eight by six inches. The author modestly introduces it, and withholds his name. Tyerman discovered the author as James Kershaw, Methodist preacher. The author tells us that he intended submitting it to John Wesley, but he was afraid he would object to "the appearance" of "panegyric" which it contains. Its fourteen cantos, and the concluding "A Prayer for Peace," though not highly poetic, are interesting reading, especially as forming the earliest known Life of John Wesley.

The next in chronological order and in the methodical order of our shelf is the very rare "Memoirs of the Late Rev. John Wesley, A. M. With a Review of His Life and Writings, and a History of Methodism from its Commencement in 1729, to the Present Time. By John Hampson, A. B. Sunderland: MDCCXCI." It is in three volumes, $6\frac{3}{4}$ inches, by $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches, pp. ix, 673, with a very rare portrait. The author and his father were among Wesley's preachers. They took offense because John Wesley did not put them, especially John Hampson, Sr., among the one hundred chosen from the one hundred and

The Real John Wesley.

ninety-one preachers, to go upon the "Deed of Declaration," which still is the legal constitution of British Methodism. The Legal Hundred did not include the Hampsons, Joseph Pillmoor, nor William Eels, all of whom left the Wesleyan connection in consequence, Pillmoor returning to America and becoming a Protestant Episcopal minister in Philadelphia. Hampson, Sr., became an independent; his son entered the Church of England, and obtained a "living" in Sunderland. Here he wrote the Memoirs. It was intended for publication before John Wesley's death, which anticipated it but a few weeks. It is colored by the dissatisfaction of the author, and largely partakes of the spirit of the document issued by John Hampson, Sr.: "An Appeal to the Reverend John and Charles Wesley: To all the Preachers who act in connexion with them, and to every member of their respective societies in England, Ireland, and America." These Memoirs contain the best pen-portraits of John Wesley's appearances extant. They must be read by every student of Wesley's wonderful life.

Immediately after Wesley's death and the

Earliest and Later Biographies.

appearance of Hampson's Memoirs, "The Life of the Rev. John Wesley, A. M., etc. By Dr. Coke and Mr. Moore," was projected. It came off the press in 1792. An edition of ten thousand was published, and in two months cleared a profit of one thousand seven hundred pounds. "The second edition" was published in the same year. The text of both is the same; this we learn by comparing our copies on file. This, though the best up-to-date Life, clearly shows that it was too hurriedly prepared, and under the disadvantage of not having access to all the necessary documents.

In 1793 came Volume I, and in 1796 came Volume II, of "The Life of the Rev. John Wesley, M. A. With the Life of the Rev. Charles Wesley, M. A. By John Whitehead, M. D.," etc. He was one of the three "legatees," not "trustees," as so often miscalled, of whom Wesley wrote: "I give all my manuscripts to Thomas Coke, Dr. Whitehead, and Henry Moore, to be burnt or published, as they see good." The reason why Whitehead was not with Coke and Moore in their published Life was because of a dispute concerning the division of the profits which would

The Real John Wesley.

accrue. Dr. Whitehead held data which they could not use, hence his Life is a great improvement on that of Coke and Moore. The Irish edition has extra matter in it, and should be read after the English.

In 1807 appeared "The Life of the Rev. John Wesley, A. M.," etc., by George Bourne. The preface is dated Baltimore, June 13, 1807. It is a book of 351 pages. It does not profess to give original matter. This seems to be the first American Life of John Wesley. Would that some fully competent American would give us a down-to-date Life of this great man.

Not until 1820 did a really great Life of Wesley appear, from the literary view-point. Then appeared "The Life of John Wesley ; and the Rise and Progress of Methodism. By Robert Southey, Esq., LL. D." Southey was a Bristolian. He had met Wesley there. There where Wesley had achieved some of his greatest successes, and where he really began his evangelistic career, would be a Wesley atmosphere for Southey to grow up in. But he seems not to have inbreathed it very deeply, for certainly he did not imbibe the Wesley spirit. He became poet laureate, and a member of the

Earliest and Later Biographies.

literati of his times, and wrote the best literary Life of John Wesley; but the well of the spiritual Wesley was deep, and Southey had nothing to draw with, as it has been aptly stated. His work served well the Methodist cause, because he commanded a large class of non-Methodist readers; but he entirely misunderstood John Wesley's motive, and the genius of Methodism. To him an ignoble ambition and a love of power were the mainsprings of Wesley's activity. He speaks of "the ambitious stirrings," and says, "No conqueror or poet was more ambitious;" "The love of power was the ruling passion in his mind," and that he demanded obedience "from his own followers as rigidly as the founder of a monastic order." With him Methodism was a kind of lazarus-house, where "disease uniformly prevailed." Assurance of sins forgiven was to him "a disease." It is true that afterward, through contact with Joseph Carne, James Nichols, and Alexander Knox, and through access to the annotations of Moore and Coleridge on the Life of Wesley, he learned better. He also promised to correct his errors in the third edition of his work. He died before it

The Real John Wesley.

came out. When it appeared, issued by his son, who knew his father's intentions, it was the same Life, but with Coleridge's notes, and bound up with it was "Remarks on the Life and Character of John Wesley. By the Late Alexander Knox, Esq." Concerning this, Canon Overton, rector of Epworth, and author of a Life of John Wesley, writes that it is "worth far more than all the rest of the two volumes (including Coleridge's notes) put together." Knox was not a Wesleyan when he wrote these "Remarks." He had been one, and had personally known and had thoroughly understood his friend and one-time leader, John Wesley. We would advise a beginner to get only the third edition of Southey's life, and to first read the "Remarks," which begin at page 407 of the second volume. Proofs of Southey's recantation may be found in Smith's "History of Wesleyan Methodism," Volume I, which is devoted to the life of John Wesley. The three-volumed work of Smith should be upon every Methodist preacher's shelves, close beside Stevens's "History of Methodism."

Before the year 1820 closed there appeared "Observations on Southey's Life of Wesley,"

Earliest and Later Biographies.

by Richard Watson. It was a great task to impose on Watson. He was equal to it. After reading both we fully agree with King George IV of England, whose curiosity led him to read Watson's review, and who is reported to have observed, "The Methodist preacher has beaten my poet laureate." The "Observations" of Watson must not be confused with his "Life of John Wesley," which appeared in 1831, seven years after that of the "legatee," not "trustee," Henry Moore, in 1824. This was called forth "especially since the strange Memoir, lately published (1824), by Robert Southey, Esq., poet laureate." The author thought that "the names of Wesley and Southey were never designed to be joined together in the same sentence." Legatee Whitehead having given up the manuscript in 1796, after he had published his second volume, Moore now had all data, and other lives to improve upon. His two-volumed work, reprinted in New York, was largely prepared in the old city of Bristol, of which circuit he was superintendent, and of which city Southey was a native. He was seventy-four years of age when the first volume appeared. It was

The Real John Wesley.

the fullest and by far the most satisfactory of all the Lives of Wesley up to that date, and must be in a complete file of the standard lives of John Wesley. In 1831 Watson's Life of Wesley appeared. With his "Observations" bound together, it is an indispensable help to a student of Wesley's life.

The next of the English literati to write of "Wesley and Methodism" was Isaac Taylor, in 1851. The portrait in it is called "Wesley in Extreme Age." It is said to be a rare one, taken from the gallery of the Foundry while Wesley was preaching. Every Wesley student knows that Wesley did not preach there, but in his own chapel, City Road, in his old age, and critics declare the portrait is a caricature which appeared with that of a vile woman, "Miss Dimple," in *The Town and Country Magazine* of 1774. Bell and Dalby reproduced the same psuedo Wesley in their edition of Southey's life. Taylor looks down upon his subject with the eyes of a philosopher. The founders, the substance, the form of Wesleyan Methodism, and its future, he discourses upon. We were surprised a while ago to read a critique which gave Taylor's the chief place

Earliest and Later Biographies.

among the biographies of Wesley. His cool utterances concerning John Wesley's lack of knowledge of human nature are surprising.

In 1870 came Tyerman's great work in three volumes. It is a perfect storehouse of facts, a mine into which every writer on Wesley must delve, and from which will yet be gathered much of the material with which some Methodist will give the world the ideal life of John Wesley. "The Living Wesley," by Dr. Rigg, is the indispensable volume. We are rather glad he could not give time to write up a complete life. We doubt that it would be as useful as the latest edition of this valuable work. From the Churchman's point of view, Umlin's "The Churchman's Life of Wesley," and the "Life of John Wesley," by Canon Overton, of Epworth Rectory, are not yet excelled. Telford's work well supplements that of his father-in-law, Dr. Rigg. Until Lelievre's new and enlarged "Life of John Wesley," appeared, in 1900, and "John Wesley, the Methodist," in 1903, we would have advised every young student to buy first John Telford's penny Life of Wesley, then his larger Life. The Rev. Richard Green's Life

The Real John Wesley.

is a very well-written and handy short Life, and MacDonald's "The Young People's Wesley," in the Epworth League Reading Course, deserves all praise. The author did not live to see his work come off the press. Of course, all the great histories of Methodism from Myles's, 1798, to Hurst's in 1903, give sketches of Wesley's life. Among these, that of Stevens takes front rank.

CHAPTER XXII.

John Wesley and His Ambition.

OUR title implies that John Wesley really was ambitious. In this we fully agree with his greatest literary biographer, Southey. But on the question of the nature and objects of his ambition we totally disagree with that poet laureate and literatus of the last century. Southey's native city was Bristol, which, from 1739 to 1791, was one of Wesley's three head centers. Though Wesley was seventy-one years old when Southey was born, he still frequented Bristol, and there met the boy Southey before he left for Westminster School, London, at which Charles Wesley had been fitted for Oxford University. Thither Southey afterwards followed him. Though only seventeen years Wesley's contemporary, yet, being environed with the Methodist movement, Southey did not catch the genius of the move-

The Real John Wesley.

ment, nor of its founder. He writes about "the ambitious stirrings" of Wesley. In his comparisons and contrasts between Charles and John Wesley he says: "Of Charles it has been said, by those who knew him best, that if there was ever a human being who disliked power, avoided pre-eminence, and shrunk from praise, it was he; whereas *no conqueror or poet was ever more ambitious than John Wesley.*" (The Life of Wesley, Vol. II, p. 186, third edition.) Again on page 98 he says: "The love of power was a ruling passion in his mind." After enumerating Wesley's "rules of a helper," on p. 102, he writes: "Thus did Wesley, who had set so bad an example of obedience, *exact it from his own followers as rigidly as the founder of a monastic order.*" These quotations suffice to give us John Wesley's motive, as misunderstood by his one-time Unitarian, but then Church of England, biographer. This great misunderstanding discolors Southey's otherwise beautiful picture of John Wesley's life. This false note has given the wrong key to many other writers on John Wesley.

Was John Wesley really ambitious? Be-

John Wesley and His Ambition.

fore answering this question categorically, by saying Yes or No, let us remind ourselves that there are two kinds of ambition, as well as a vast multitude of objects. There is a holy, a Scriptural ambition, and an unholy and Christless ambition. The latter kind Tennyson puts among "the passions that make earth hell."

"Put down the passions that make earth hell!
Down with ambition, avarice, pride,
Jealousy, down! Cut off from the mind
The bitter springs of anger and of fear."

The immortal William, referring to the same kind of ambition, makes Mark Antony say over the dead body of Cæsar:

"The noble Brutus
Hath told you Cæsar was ambitious:
If it were so, it were a grievous fault;
And grievously hath Cæsar answered it."

We incline to substitute Southey for Brutus, and Wesley for Cæsar. Again, in the same sense, Wolsey addresses Cromwell:

"Cromwell, I charge thee, fling away ambition;
By that sin fell the angels; how can man, then,
The image of his Maker, hope to win by it?
Love thyself last."

The Real John Wesley.

It is the Shakesperean kind of ambition which Southey ascribes to John Wesley. But, if ever mortal man "loved himself last," and was free from unholy ambition, John Wesley was that one.

Yet Wesley was a very ambitious man. He was ambitious in the Scriptural and Pauline sense of the term. Paul says of himself and of the Christians at Corinth: "We are ambitious to be well pleasing unto him." (2 Cor. v, 9.) He also urges the Thessalonians that they "be ambitious to be quiet and to do your own business." (1 Thess. iv, 11.) For himself he declares that he is "ambitious to preach the gospel" (Rom. xv, 20) to the raw heathen. Why did n't the revisers of 1881 give us this equivalent for the Greek word in the texts and not relegate it to the margins? John Wesley "studied," "labored," "strove," as they make Paul do; both Paul and Wesley were intensely ambitious in the truest meaning of the term. Does *ambikio* mean a going around or about? Surely the itinerants, Paul and Wesley, were both "Rounders."

Yes, John Wesley was intensely ambitious.

John Wesley and His Ambition.

His ambition, like Paul's, was evangelistic, not egoistic. Paul said:

"I have fully preached the gospel of Christ; yea, being ambitious so to preach the gospel, not where Christ was already named, that I might not build upon another man's foundations: but as it is written,

"'They shall see, to whom no tidings of him came, And they who have not heard shall understand.'"

—Romans xx, 19-21, R. V.

Such holy ambition led Wesley to travel nearly two hundred and fifty thousand miles, and to preach forty thousand sermons, during the fifty years of his evangelistic ministry. Paul said, in 2 Cor. v, 9, "We are ambitious to be well pleasing unto Him." Whom did John Wesley seek to please? Not himself. Listen to him: "Newcastle, Wednesday, June 23d, 1779. I rested here. Lovely place, and lovely company! But I believe there is another world. Therefore I must arise and go hence." On Friday, June 4, 1790 (only eight months before his removal to the house above), he writes. "We reached Newcastle. In this and Kingswood House, were I to do my own will,

The Real John Wesley.

I should choose to spend the short remainder of my days. But it can not be; this is not my rest." Like Paul, and the common Master of both Paul and Wesley, he pleased not himself. Ease and self-indulgence would have said, "Stay in these spots you love so well, and do good in these neighborhoods;" but holy ambition said, "Go forth and please your Lord and Master."

Paul urged the Thessalonians (1 Thess. iv, 11) to "be ambitious to be quiet, and to do your own business." If he meant peaceful among themselves, and not meddlesome in other people's matters, this was the ambition John Wesley was constantly urging upon his people. Certainly Paul and Wesley were both ambitious men, and they also sought to inspire others with their own spirit.

John Wesley could have shone as a fine, as well as a voluminous writer, but he purposely refrained from literary greatness, because he was ambitious for literary usefulness. His pen was always used as a lever to lift the common people up to personal goodness, and general usefulness to their fellow-men. Witness the four hundred and fifty-three different

John Wesley and His Ambition.

issues of his press, all of which he either wrote, abridged, selected, or edited. Had he been ambition for a personal following, he would never have insisted upon his people retaining their connection with the Church of England, from which he would not, to the very last, separate himself. He would have been more than happy, he was even ambitious to land all his people safely in the old Church, and to let the names of Methodist and Wesley be forgotten.

Our Epworth League motto, "Look up," is utterly meaningless if it is not intended to inspire each young Leaguer with an ambition to be some one, and to do something to lift some one up towards God and good. Of course, it implies aspiration, but not that alone; it also implies a holy ambition like that of Paul and of Wesley. It is true that Southey learned better, confessed his error, and promised to recant in his next edition. It is also true that his son declined to carry out his father's intention to alter the text of his otherwise excellent "Life of John Wesley." That brilliant essayist, Augustine Birrell, has discovered the true motive of John Wesley, which was also

The Real John Wesley.

the human source of his ambition. It was the saying of "a serious man" to John Wesley: "Sir, you wish to serve God and go to heaven. Remember, you can not serve him alone. You must therefore find companions or make them. The Bible knows nothing of solitary religion." The "Methodist movement" is a long and loud protest against solitary religion, and offers a wide field for the noble ambition of making companions for the heavenly life and the heavenly destiny.

CHAPTER XXIII.

John Wesley Leader, and One-Man Power.

REAL leaders are born, and are not made. Good following is a necessary lesson in the school of true leadership. He who has never learned to obey, must necessarily be deficient in the ability to rule. The "Leader and Commander of the People," Himself first "learned obedience." The head of a great corporation, a few days ago, took us all over the "works." When we reached the dirtiest of all the kinds of work, and what seemed the most servile of all, he said, "My father started me in this department, and I had to work my way up through all the others." No wonder he is now leading that corporation up to its highest point of success, and is so skillfully directing that host of employees. He learned to follow wise instructions and to obey the powers above

The Real John Wesley.

him, and then became the successful leader that he now is.

Would-be leaders are those who have never yet learned to follow. That John Wesley was a great leader is undoubted. Certainly his was

“The monarch mind, the mystery of commanding,
The birth-hour gift, the art Napoleon
Of wielding, gathering, molding, welding, banding
The hearts of thousands till they beat as one.”

His born qualities of leadership were educed by his filial obedience at his Epworth Home, and by his “fag” obedience at Charterhouse School. He was willing to “bide his time” before assuming his natural place, the throne of leadership to which he had been born. His good following he continued until the end of his leadership on earth. He ever had an open ear to the voice of his Master, and an open eye to see providential beckonings. Almost every new departure he made in his great work was unplanned until God’s finger beckoned that way. His Georgian mission, society and class meetings, lay preaching, the financiering of the new movement, the ordinations for America, and the organization of American Methodism into a separate Church, were all his

Leader and One-Man Power.

loyal followings of his Divine Leader. He claimed that the whole Methodist movement was not his child, but the child of Providence. He regarded himself as simply being permitted to bring it to birth. He did not even "name this child." He simply accepted its name, "Methodist."

John Wesley was a leader, even when not called upon to be a ruler. Rule he could when necessary, but leadership was his forte. Nightingale in his "Portraiture of Methodism," which might justly be called a "Caricature of Methodism," printed John Wesley as the ruler, saying: "Notwithstanding his sincere piety, a strong disposition *to rule* was always very predominant in his character. You doubtless have heard, Madam, the anecdote of his haranguing his fellow school-boys, when very young, from the writing desks and forms; and that when he was reprimanded by his master for his forwardness, he exclaimed:

'Better to reign in hell than serve in heaven.'

What truth there is in this anecdote, I will not take upon me to say; but it appears well enough to accord with the spirit and conduct

The Real John Wesley.

which he manifested in the subsequent part of his life. That he was very forward to govern, is certain," etc. (Page 31.)

This story filtered down into the histories until, in 1809, when the true version was given by Miss Sarah Wesley, daughter of Charles Wesley, in a letter to Adam Clarke. Her true version reads: "When John Wesley was at Charterhouse, the schoolmaster, Mr. Tooke, missing all the little boys in the play-ground, supposed them, by their quietness, to be in some mischief. Searching, he found them all assembled in the schoolroom around my uncle, who was amusing them with instructive tales, to which they listened rather than follow their accustomed sports. The master expressed much approbation toward them and John Wesley, and he wished him to repeat this entertainment as often as he could obtain auditors and so well employ his time." This true version of the old story pictures John Wesley, the boy leader, and not as the ruler of his playmates.

A born leader, such as was John Wesley, naturally and easily moves up to the head of the column. The ranks open for him to do so.

Leader and One-Man Power.

This is seen in the family, the social circle, and in the larger fields of Church and State. Little people may snub such ; but it matters not. Some hand may be used to hold them down, but bob up again they certainly will. By and by, the born followers fall into line and follow their leader. When John Wesley returned to Oxford from Wroote, he found his brother Charles dubbed "Methodist ;" and also at the head of a coterie of good young men, later called the "Holy Club." At once John joins, and at once he is placed at their head. Henceforth Charles speaks of the work as that of "My brother and I," not of myself and my brother. All the members gladly gave leadership to John. One of them, Gambold, says : "Mr. John Wesley was always the chief manager, for he was very fit. . . . Yet he never assumed anything to himself above his companions. Any of them might speak their mind, and their words were as strictly regarded by him as his were by them." He was the "Curator," and was sometimes called "the Father of the Holy Club." Hearing this, his father claimed to be the grandfather of the club. He said, "I had rather any of my sons

The Real John Wesley.

should be so dignified and distinguished than to have the title of 'His Holiness.' " When the leader was absent, the club declined, and dwindled down from twenty-seven to five.

George Whitefield acknowledged John Wesley's superior leadership in the matter of organizing the results of his evangelistic work. In this matter John Wesley showed good statesmanship. Whitefield says: "My brother Wesley acted wisely. The souls that were awakened under his ministry he joined in societies, and thus preserved the fruit of his labor. This I neglected, and my people are a rope of sand."

The cry of "one-man power" had been so loud that, at the Conference of 1766, John Wesley faced this question: "What power is this which you exercise over both preachers and societies?" His answer was: "It was merely in obedience to the Providence of God, for the good of the people, that I first accepted this power which I never sought. It is on the same consideration, not for profit, honor, or pleasure, that I use it this day."

In August, 1751, Charles Wesley seems to have suspected his brother of usurping power.

Leader and One-Man Power.

As usual, the brothers talked it over. Peronet's aid was called in, and certain articles of agreement were drawn up and signed by each. Moore gives them in his second volume, page 178. John reluctantly consented to equal partnership in leading the great work, because Charles had really ceased to itinerate as of yore. However, he tried for awhile, and then again concluded that this gospel ship could only safely carry one captain. Not because, as Whitehead said, John would be supreme or "he would be nobody," but because Charles could not now go everywhere preaching and superintending the work. From this time on John was leader, and Charles assistant, in the great movement. Each was satisfied with his position.

Charles Wesley's rule and leadership were less tactful than those of his brother John. On renewing class tickets of Methodists he refused tickets to J. and E. R. and said: "*The dissenters I sent to their respective meetings.*" This was on October 31, 1753. John says of his people, "I have no right nor power to dispose of them, contrary to their consciences." Moore wisely says: "Such was the

The Real John Wesley.

difference between the two brothers! Much has been said of the authority assumed by Mr. Wesley over his people. But he never attempted to use such authority as we have seen his pious brother exercise, and which Dr. Whitehead so much applauds. He only required that they should observe the rules to which they assented when they joined him." (Vol. II, p. 197.)

In 1773, also at Perronet's, at Shoreham, John Wesley wrote to John Fletcher, designating him as his successor. In this letter he advocates the one-man power, saying: "It is not good that the supreme power should be lodged in many hands. Let there be one chief governor." He asks, "But has God provided one so qualified? Who is he?" He also adds, "Thou art the man!" Elsewhere, referring to his government of the preachers, he wrote: "The desire of serving me, as sons in the gospel, was on their part, not mine. My wish was to live and die in retirement. But I did not see that I could refuse them my help and be guiltless before God. What, then, is my power? It is the power of admitting into, and excluding from, the societies under my care;

Leader and One-Man Power.

of choosing and removing leaders and stewards; of receiving or not receiving helpers; and of appointing them when, where, and how to help me. And as it was merely in obedience to the providences of God, and for the good of the people, that I first accepted this power, which I never sought—nay, a hundred times labored to throw off—so it is on the same considerations, not for profit, honor, or pleasure, that I use it at this day. But several gentlemen are offended at my having so much power. My answer to them is this: I did not seek any part of this power; it came upon me unawares. But when it was come, not daring to bury that talent, I used it to the best of my judgment. Yet I was never fond of it. I always did, and do now, bear it as my burden, the burden which God lays upon me; and therefore I dare not yet lay it down." This was written fifty years after the yoke of leadership had been laid upon him by Jesus Christ, whose true yoke-fellow he was.

Again he said: "The power I have I never sought; it was the unexpected result of the work which God was pleased to work by me. I therefore suffer it till I can find some one

The Real John Wesley.

to ease me of my burden." To the charge of "making himself a pope," and of "shackling free-born Englishmen," and of being arbitrary, he replied: "If you mean by arbitrary power a power which I exercise singly, without any colleagues therein, this is certainly true; but I see no harm in it. Arbitrary in this sense is a very harmless word. I bear this burden merely for your sakes."

He was not only born a great ruler, but rulership was also thrust upon him. Macaulay saw in him "a genius for government." To Southey he was "a man of great views, great energies, and great virtues; the most influential mind of the last century; the man who will have produced the greatest effects centuries, or perhaps millenniums, hence." Southey here furnishes a test of great leadership; namely, posthumous influence. When the death of a leader increases his power as a living force in the world, his true greatness is a settled question. St. Paul, Webster, and Lincoln, dead to earth, are more alive than ever, in the liberty of the Church of Christ, the patriotism of our country, and the principles of equality

Leader and One-Man Power.

and freedom which the Stars and Stripes flaunt before the world.

John Wesley, the leader, is one of the livest men of this new century. His life pulsates through about thirty millions of the human race, and throbs in the Christian civilization of the world of to-day. In John Wesley we think we find an expression of the mind of God, on the question of "One-Man Power." How much is said against it, and especially in free and democratic America! Aristocracy and autocracy are abominations in our eyes and ears. "We, the people," have much to say about it, and do much to prevent it. But we have changed the root-meaning of the word aristocracy, which means right rulers. There have always been those among men who have the right to rule their fellows, the God-given right of qualifications and call to rule. God has a well-defined aristocracy in this world; they are his good and obedient children; they are now fast coming to their thrones; witness, the Christian rulers of the world to-day and the new social order, at the head of which is the great "Captain," *i. e.*, "File Leader," "of our sal-

The Real John Wesley.

vation." They are yet to inherit the earth, and then to be promoted to judge the angels in heaven. These are God's aristocracy, and are a distinct order of beings. Each is a new creation of God. Each is born to have dominion. Among these God seems to have always had some true autocrats, some whom he has "invested with supreme strength, and called to real supremacy in the carrying out of his great purposes for men." When such a one appears in any realm, then the cry of "One-Man Power" is heard.

Do not the leading facts of the history of the race each center around some one man? God created one man, Adam, and made one woman, Eve. God redeemed mankind by One Man, the God-Man, Christ Jesus.

Xerxes, Alexander, Napoleon, Grant, each was one man, and each was powerful. George Washington, Hamilton, Bismarck, and Gladstone, each was one man, with power.

The one-man power in religion is ever prominent. Confucius, Buddha, Mohammed, and Joseph Smith, the Mormon, illustrate it. Bible religion centers around Noah, Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Samuel, David, Daniel, Elijah,

Leader and One-Man Power.

Nehemiah, John the Baptist, John the Evangelist, Peter, James, and Paul, the most powerful of them all. The history of the Christian Church is largely the history of a series of one-man-at-a-time leaders; such as Justin the Martyr, Augustine, Calvin, Arminius, Socinus, Swedenborg, Luther, Wesley, and General Booth. As we read history, and as we watch recent historic movements, we are more inclined to think that God believes in the One-Man power, *at least in the beginnings of great movements*. Could the great Salvation Army, which is now greatest as a Christian Socialistic force, ever have made such progress had General Booth not believed in the One-Man power? When it came to the question of division of power, he chose rather to have the forces divide than to divide his power, even with his own son. Whether, at that juncture, his course was wise or not, we will not attempt to say. Had John Wesley ceased to be the leader of the people called Methodists, would there be any such people known to the men of to-day? In the beginnings of great epochs, when the hour strikes, God brings forth his man for the hour. "He putteth down *one*, and

The Real John Wesley.

setteth up *another*." Not many, but one, and then another, at a time, and always at the right time—his time.

We also think that the time arrives in each great movement when the one man set up must divide his power with some others whom he has been the means of raising up to help carry on his well-begun work. John Wesley felt this, and by his famous Deed-Poll, and by the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America, both done in one year, 1784, he thus acknowledged God's order of one-man-leadership, until the time comes when the followers are capable of sharing in the great work of leading. John Wesley, Leader, is a standing illustration of the right kind of One-Man Power. Emerson said: "An institution is but the length of the shadow of one man." If Methodism, on its human side, is the shadow of John Wesley, then his shadow girdles the globe.

CHAPTER XXIV.

His Translation.

BY AN EYE-WITNESS.

THE eye witness who records these scenes signed herself "E. R." She was Miss Elizabeth Ritchie, a very dear young friend of John Wesley, whom he wished to have with him in his dying hour. She was the only one who wrote out the dying scenes, in a tract, entitled, "An Authentic Account of the Last Moments of that Great and Good Man, the Rev. John Wesley, M. A., Who Died on Wednesday Morning, March 2d, 1791, Aged 88, To Which is Added a Sketch of His Character."

From this printed account by "E. R." have come all others, even Dr. Whitehead's, which he used in his funeral sermon. He and all others abridge the original, which is so very rare that only two copies are known to exist.

The Real John Wesley.

One is owned by the Rev. Dr. Rigg, of London, England. The other, which is here given, belongs to the Rev. Dr. Franklin Hamilton, of Boston, who has kindly allowed the author to reprint it in this volume. Miss Ritchie became Mrs. Mortimer. She was buried in the City Road Chapel burying-ground, in which she had seen her dear friend, John Wesley, buried. Dr. Jabez Bunting preached her funeral sermon.

ON Thursday, the 17th of February, Mr. Wesley preached at Lambeth, from "Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life." When he came home he seemed very unwell; but on being asked how he did, only said he believed he had taken a little cold.

Friday, the 18th, Mr. Wesley read and wrote as usual, dined at Mr. Urling's, and preached at Chelsea in the evening from "The King's business requires haste," but was obliged to stop once or twice, and told the people his cold so affected his voice as to prevent his speaking without those necessary pauses. He was prevailed on to let Mr. Rogers and Mr. Bradford meet the classes,

His Translation.

and had a high degree of fever all the way home.

Saturday, the 19th, reading and writing filled up most of his precious time, though to those that were with him his complaints (fever and weakness) seemed evidently increasing. He dined at Mrs. Griffith's, Islington, and, while there, desired a friend to read to him the fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of Job. He was easily prevailed upon to let Mr. Brackenbury meet the penitents. But still struggling with his weakness, some of us, with hearts full of foreboding fears, saw him ready to sink under it.

He rose, according to his custom, early in the morning, but utterly unfit for his Sabbath's exercise. At seven o'clock he was obliged to lie down, and slept between three and four hours. When he awoke, he said, "I have not had such a comfortable sleep this fortnight past." The effects were soon gone, and in the afternoon he lay down again, and slept an hour or two. Afterwards two of his own discourses on our Lord's Sermon on the Mount were read to him, and in the evening he came down to supper.

The Real John Wesley.

Monday, the 20th, he seemed much better, and though his friends tried to dissuade him from it, he would keep an engagement made some time before to dine with Mr. G——, at Twickenham. Miss Wesley* and another friend accompanied him. In his way thither he called on Lady Mary Fitzgerald. The conversation was truly profitable, and well became a last visit. He prayed in such a spiritual manner, as I believe her ladyship will never forget. At T—— he seemed much better, and the first and last visit to that pleasing family and lovely place will, I trust, prove a lasting blessing. When we came home he seemed much better, and on Tuesday went on with his usual work; dined at Mr. Horton's, Islington; preached in the evening at the City Road, from "We, through the Spirit, wait for the hope of righteousness by faith;" met the leaders, and seemed better than he had been for some days. Our hopes again revived, and though we feared that the little excursion which lay before him might be too much for his strength, yet we flattered ourselves with his longer stay.

* The daughter of the late Rev. Charles Wesley.

His Translation.

On Wednesday morning, Mr. Rogers went with him to Leatherhead to visit a family who have lately begun to receive the truth. They had the honor of this almost worn out veteran in his blessed Master's service, delivering his last public message beneath their roof. O that all that heard may take the solemn warning, and so embrace the blessed invitation he gave them from "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near," as to meet our dear departed friend at God's right hand!

On Thursday he paid his last visit to that lovely place and family, Mr. Wolff's at Balaam, which I have often heard him speak of with pleasure and much affection. Here, Mr. Rogers says, he was cheerful, and seemed nearly as well as usual, till Friday, about breakfast-time, when he seemed very heavy. About eleven o'clock Mrs. Wolff brought him home. I was struck with his manner of getting out of the coach and going into the house, but more so when he went upstairs, and when he sat down in the chair. I ran for some refreshment; but before I could get anything for him, he had sent Mr. R—— out of the

The Real John Wesley.

room and, desired not to be interrupted for half an hour by any one, adding, "not even if Joseph Bradford come." Mr. Bradford came a few minutes after, and as soon as the limited time was expired, went into the room. Immediately after he came out, and desired me to mull some wine with spices, and carry it to Mr. Wesley; he drank a little and seemed sleepy. In a few minutes he was seized with sickness, threw it up, and said, "I must lie down." We immediately sent for Dr. Whitehead. On his coming in, Mr. Wesley smiled, and said, "Doctor, they are more afraid than hurt." I knew not how he judged of our fears, for though my full heart felt as if "the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof" were near at hand to take our father home, yet I had said nothing; nor do I know that any one around him had, at that time, feelings similar to my own. He lay most of the day with a quick pulse, burning fever, and extremely sleepy. In the evening, while pouring out my soul into the bosom of our Lord, telling him all I felt with respect to the Church, and trying to plead for our dearest father's longer stay, that word, "Father, I will that they whom thou

His Translation.

hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory," seemed so immediately given me from above, that, with dear Mrs. Fletcher on a similar occasion, I may say, "From that time my prayer for his life had lost its wings."

Saturday, the 25th, he continued much the same; spoke but little, and, if roused to answer a question or take a little refreshment (which was seldom more than a spoonful at a time), soon dozed again. My mind felt much freedom to pray that our Lord would abate the stupor occasioned by the complaint; and, I believe, all that knew how the corruptible body pressed down the active, vigorous spirit which for so long a series of years had been its inhabitant, earnestly united to entreat our gracious Lord that, if it were no longer consistent with his will to spare our dear aged father to go in and out before us, we might at least receive his dying charges, and enjoy the comfort (amidst this awful scene) of hearing him seal, with his latest breath, the blessed truths we had long been accustomed to receive from God through him. We were indulged herein, and on Saturday night the stupor abated, though

The Real John Wesley.

the fever still continued, but not so violent as before.

On Sunday morning, with a little of Mr. Bradford's help, Mr. Wesley got up, took a cup of tea, and seemed much better. Many of our friends were all hopes; yet Dr. Whitehead said, he was not out of danger from his present complaints; and though I should have rejoiced in his longer stay, it seemed to me only as an answer to our prayer, and that our Lord was about to indulge us with such a mixture in our cup as would, at least for the present, soften the approaching stroke. Mr. Wesley, while sitting in his chair, looked quite cheerful, and, in a manner we all deeply felt, repeated the latter part of that verse in the Scripture Hymns on "Forsake me not when my strength faileth."

"Till glad I'll lay this body down;
Thy servant, Lord, attend,
And O, my life of mercy crown
With a triumphant end!"

Soon after, in a most emphatic manner, he said, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth." Some friends, then present, speaking rather too much to him,

His Translation.

he tried to exert himself, but was soon exhausted and obliged to lie down. After being quiet awhile, he looked up and said, "Speak to me; I can not speak." On which Miss Wesley and I, there being no one else in the room, said, "Shall we pray with you, Sir?" He earnestly replied, "Yes;" and while we prayed that if our Father must lay this body down, and leave us orphans, our gracious Lord would let down rays of heavenly glory into this waiting spirit, and pour out on us, and all his children, the promised Comforter, his whole soul seemed engaged with God for an answer, and his hearty Amen thrilled through us. About half after two he said: "There is no need for more. When at Bristol [this refers to an illness with which Mr. Wesley was seized at the Bristol Conference in the year 1783] my words were,

‘I the chief of sinners am,
But Jesus died for me!’ ”

Seeing him very weak, and not able to speak much, I said, "Is this the present language of your heart, and do you now feel as you

The Real John Wesley.

then did?" He replied, "Yes." I then repeated,

"Bold I approach th' eternal throne,
And claim the crown through Christ my own,"

and added: "'T is enough. He, our precious Immanuel has purchased, has promised all." He earnestly replied, "He is all, he is all;" and then said, "I will go." I said, "To joys above; Lord help me to follow you," to which he replied, "Amen." Soon after to Miss Wesley, who sat by his bedside, he said, "Sally, have you zeal for God now?" On her replying, "I wish to love him better, that I may have more," he said, "Do you continue to rise early." After this the fever was very high, and at times affected his head; but even then he was generally either meeting classes, going to preach, or something that proved that, though his head was subject to a temporary derangement, his heart was wholly engaged in his Master's work. In the evening he got up again, and while sitting in his chair, thinking, I suppose, of the kind friends he had lately visited, he said, "What are all the pretty things at B——, to a dying man?" Speak-

His Translation.

ing of a lady he had only lately known, he said he believed "she had real religion." How necessary for every one to be on the right foundation! He then said:

"'I the chief of sinners am,
But Jesus died for me!'

We must be justified by faith, and then go on to sanctification."

Monday, the 28th, his weakness increased apace, and his friends in general being greatly alarmed, Dr. Whitehead was desirous they should call in another physician. Mr. Bradford mentioned his desire to our honored father, which he absolutely refused, saying, "Dr. Whitehead knows my constitution better than any one; I am perfectly satisfied, and will not have any one else." He slept most of the day, spoke but little; yet that little testified how much his whole heart was taken up in the care of the Churches, the glory of God, and the things pertaining to that kingdom to which he was hastening. Once, in a low but very dignified manner, he said, "There is no way into the holiest but by the blood of Jesus." Had he had strength at that time, it seemed as if he would have said more.

The Real John Wesley.

Tuesday, March 1st, after a very restless night (though when asked whether he was in pain, he generally answered, "No," and never complained through his whole illness, except once, when he said, that he felt a pain in his left breast when he drew his breath), he began singing:

"All glory to God in the sky,
And peace upon earth be restored;
O Jesus, exalted on high,
Appear, our omnipotent Lord,
Who, meanly in Bethlehem born,
Didst stoop to redeem a lost race;
Once more to thy people return,
And reign in thy kingdom of grace.

O wouldst thou again be made known,
Again in the Spirit descend,
And set up in each of thine own,
A kingdom that never shall end!
Thou only art able to bless,
And make the glad nations obey,
And bid the dire enmity cease,
And bow the whole world to thy sway."

Here his strength failed; but after lying still a while, he called on Mr. Bradford to give him a pen and ink. He brought them, but the right hand had well-nigh forgot its

His Translation.

cunning, and those active fingers, which had been the blessed instruments of spiritual consolation and pleasing instruction to thousands, could no longer perform their office. Some time after he said to me, "I want to write." I brought him a pen and ink, and on putting the pen into his hand, and holding the paper before him, he said, "I can not." I replied, "Let me write for you, Sir; tell me what you would say?" "Nothing," returned he, "but that God is with us." In the forenoon he said, "I will get up." While his things were getting ready, he broke out in a manner which, considering his extreme weakness, astonished us all, in these blessed words:

"I'll praise my Maker while I've breath,
And when my voice is lost in death,
Praise shall employ my nobler powers;
My days of praise shall ne'er be past,
While life, and thought, and being last,
Or immortality endures.

Happy the man whose hopes rely
On Israel's God; he made the sky,
And earth, and seas, with all their train;
His truth forever stands secure;
He saves the oppressed, he feeds the poor,
And none shall find his promise vain."

The Real John Wesley.

These were also the last words our reverend and dear father ever gave out in the City Road Chapel; viz., on Tuesday evening before preaching from, "We through the Spirit wait," etc.

But to return to the chamber where this great and good man met his fate, and which those who had the honor of attending, felt, was

"Privileged beyond the common walk
Of virtuous life, quite in the verge of heaven."

Some of our friends, fearing that matters respecting the meeting of the preachers at the awful event we now anticipated, were not fully settled, Mr. Bradford asked our dying father if he wished things to continue as determined upon when debated at the last Conference; or if he desired, in case of his removal, that any or all of them should be convened? He answered, "No, by no means; let all things remain as concluded at the Conference." When he got into his chair, we saw him change for death; but he, regardless of his dying frame, said, with a weak voice: "Lord, thou givest strength to those

His Translation.

that can speak, and to those that can not. Speak, Lord, to all our hearts, and let them know that thou loosest tongues." He then sang,

"To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
Who sweetly all agree."

Here his voice failed him, and after gasping for breath, he said: "Now we have done. Let us all go." We were obliged to lay him down on the bed, from which he rose no more; but after lying still, and sleeping a little, he called me to him, and said, "Betsy, you, Mr. B——, etc., pray and praise." We kneeled down, and truly our hearts were filled with the divine presence; the room seemed to be filled with God. A little after he spoke to Mr. Bradford about the key and contents of his bureau. While he attended to the directions given him, Mr. Wesley called me, and said, "I would have all things ready for my executors, Mr. Wolff, Mr. Horton, and Mr. Marriot." Here his voice again failed; but, taking breath, he added, "Let me be buried in nothing but what is woollen, and let my corpse be carried in my coffin into the chapel."

The Real John Wesley.

Then, as if done with all below, he again begged we would pray and praise. We called up several friends that were in the house, and all kneeled down; Mr. Broadbent prayed, at which time Mr. Wesley's fervor of spirit was visible to every one present; but in particular parts of the prayer his whole soul seemed to be engaged in a manner which evidently showed how ardently he longed for the full accomplishment of our united desires. One thing we could not but remark, that when Mr. Broadbent was praying in a very expressive manner, that if God were about to take away our father and our head to his eternal rest, he would be pleased to continue and increase his blessing upon the doctrine and discipline which he had long made his aged servant the means of propagating and establishing in the world, such a degree of fervor accompanied his loud Amen as was every way expressive of his soul's being engaged in the answer of our petitions. On rising from our knees, he took Mr. Broadbent's hand, drew him near, and with the utmost placidness took leave of him, and said, "Farewell, farewell." Mr. and Mrs. Rogers, Mr. Horton, etc., drew near

His Translation.

the bedside, and he took an affectionate leave of them in the same manner.

The next pleasing, awful scene was the great exertion he made in order to make Mr. Broadbent (who had not left the room) understand that he fervently desired a sermon he had written on the Love of God should be scattered abroad, and given away to everybody. Something else he wished to say, but, alas! his speech failed, and those lips which used to feed many were no longer able (except when particular strength was given) to convey their accustomed sounds. A little later, Mr. Horton coming in, we hoped that if he had anything of moment on his mind which he wished to communicate, he would again try to tell us what it was, and that either Mr. Horton, or some of those who were most used to hear our dear father's dying voice, would be able to interpret his meaning; but though he strove to speak, we were still unsuccessful. Finding we could not understand what he said, he paused a little, and then, with all the remaining strength he had, cried out, "The best of all is, God is with us;" and then, as if to assert the faithfulness of our promise-

The Real John Wesley.

keeping Jehovah, and comfort the hearts of his weeping friends, he lifted up his dying arm in token of victory, and raising his feeble voice, with a holy triumph not to be expressed, again repeated the heart-reviving words, "The best of all is, God is with us." Some time after, giving him something to wet his parched lips, he said, "It will not do; we must take the consequence; never mind the poor carcase." A little after this, seeing Mr. Rogers and Mr. Rankin stand by his bedside, he asked "Who are these?" (His sight now almost gone prevented him from distinctly knowing his most intimate friends, except in a peculiar light, or by their voice.) Being informed who they were, Mr. Rogers then said, "Sir, we are come to rejoice with you; you are going to receive your crown." "It is the Lord's doing," he replied, "and marvelous in our eyes."

On being told Mrs. Wesley (the widow of the late Rev. Charles Wesley) was come, he said, "He giveth his servants rest." He thanked her as she pressed his hand, and affectionately endeavored to take his leave of her. On wetting his lips he said, "We thank thee, O Lord, for these and all thy mercies; bless the

His Translation.

Church and King; grant us truth and peace, through Jesus Christ our Lord, for ever and ever!" At another time, "He causeth his servants to lie down in peace." I replied, "They lie down in peace, indeed, who rest in our Redeemer's bosom. Lord, help us to rest in him, and then rest with you in glory." To which he replied, "Amen." Then pausing a little, he cried, "The clouds drop fatness!" and soon after, "The Lord is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge!" He then called us to prayer. Mr. Broadbent was again the mouth of our full hearts, and though Mr. Wesley was greatly exhausted by these exertions, he appeared still more fervent in spirit. Several of his relations being present, Mr. Broadbent particularly thanked God for the honor he had conferred upon the family, and then fervently prayed that the glory might never be tarnished, nor they want a man to minister before the Lord to the latest generations; at the end of which petition our dying father discovered such ardency of desire that the prayer might be answered, by repeating his Amen, as deeply affected all present. These exertions were, however, too much for his feeble

The Real John Wesley.

frame, and most of the night following, though he was often heard to attempt to repeat the psalm before mentioned, he could only get out,

“I'll praise—I'll praise!”—

On Wednesday morning we found the closing scene drew near. Mr. Bradford, his faithful friend, and most affectionate son, prayed with him, and the last word he was heard to articulate was “Farewell!” A few minutes before ten, while Miss Wesley, Mr. Horton, Mr. Brackenbury, Mr. and Mrs. Rogers, Dr. Whitehead, Mr. Broadbent, Mr. Whitfield, Mr. Bradford, and E. R. were kneeling around his bed, according to his often expressed desire, without a lingering groan, this man of God, gathered up his feet in the presence of his brethren! We felt what was inexpressible; the ineffable sweetness that filled our hearts as our beloved pastor, father, and friend entered his Master's joy, for a few moments blunted the edge of our painful feelings on this truly glorious, melancholy occasion. As our dear aged father breathed his last, Mr. Bradford was inwardly saying, “Lift up your heads, O ye gates; be ye lift up ye everlasting doors,

His Translation.

and let this heir of glory enter in." Mr. Rogers gave out—

“Waiting to receive thy spirit,
Lo! the Savior stands above,
Shews the purchase of his merit,
Reaches out the crown of love.”

One then said: “Let us pray for the mantle of our Elijah;” on which Mr. Rogers prayed in the spirit for “the descent of the Holy Ghost on us, and all who mourn the general loss the Church militant sustains by the removal of our much loved father to his great reward. Even so. Amen.”

E. R.

CHAPTER XXV.

The Mother Church of Methodism.

THE Mother Church of American Methodism is not the "Church of England," by law established, but the "Wesleyan Methodist Church." "The British Conference" is the Mother Conference of all others. During the thirty-three years since we left the maternal roof-tree to live with the eldest daughter, which has so outgrown her mother—the "Methodist Episcopal Church of America"—we have not lost an affectionate interest in the "Old Body," as the English Methodist daughters frequently call the Wesleyan Church. Having made seven visits to England during the past twenty-five years, we have had opportunities to watch her doings since we lived and labored in her "Connexion."

The "chiel among them takin' notes" has observed the tenacity with which she holds on

The Mother Church of Methodism.

to the Scripture doctrines held by the Methodist Church and mostly to the old formulas of those doctrines. A restatement of those doctrines seems too often to be regarded with suspicion and even coldness. Yet some of her teachers, believing that more light is continually breaking forth from God's Word, bravely turn that light on the old truths. The rising generation will walk in that light, and bless the light bearers for their fidelity and courage.

The old mother's loyalty to Methodist hymns is most praiseworthy. Worship in whatever church you will, there you find the Methodist hymn-book in use. In most of her missions the whole or a part is used. Next to the Bible, the English Methodist regards his hymn-book as a means of grace and knowledge of the truth. The Mother Church has not been deluged with floods of cheap stuff set to cheaper music, and containing bad theology, such as has poured in upon us during the past three decades, to our great hurt as a people. Hail to the low-priced Methodist Hymnal now within reach of all worshipers. and being introduced at our

The Real John Wesley.

camp-meetings. We shall have more stalwart Christians as a result. Though we shall not sing so many hymns nor stanzas of hymns, as do English Methodists, yet our profiting will soon appear.

The class-meeting with them is still a test of membership. Continued absence without proper reasons is followed by the entry: "Ceased to meet," which means dropped from the records. How would this rule among us affect the millions of members we yearly return? Would it not spoil some statistical speeches? Class moneys are still in vogue among them. In addition to seat rent, deficits at end of year, benevolences, and even before these comes the weekly class money, which each member who is not able to prove himself unable to do so must pay for the privilege of membership in the Methodist Church. He also pays for his quarterly ticket of membership. Two cents a week, and twenty-four cents a quarter, is considered the minimum for each member. Our own class-books have the money columns, but they are always blank. We know of one Church in New England which had more than two hundred full mem-

The Mother Church of Methodism.

bers on its membership records who were not found on any of the money records of that Church. What should be done with full members who can, but will not, pay to the Church which literally carries them along?

The dear old mother seems less afraid of disciplining her children than does her eldest daughter. Her splendid missionary record, her debt-paying on old trusts, her million-guinea Twentieth-century Thank-offering fund, her large number of fine new church buildings, her loving care for her ministry, especially in their declining years, her growing social influence in the country—all excite our admiration. We are proud of our dear old mother and the record she is still making.

We are also especially pleased to see her amending her ways. She is not faultless even yet, but each recent visit has shown us marked improvements. She is becoming more flexible in methods of worship. Though still the grand old liturgy of the Church of England is feebly rendered by small congregations in some large chapel buildings on Sunday mornings, yet many such congregations have laid it aside, as we in America did at the very beginning,

The Real John Wesley.

for the freer service, more suited to the people of the community. We could name congregations which have greatly increased by its disuse, and also many laymen who, having grown rich, have left for the Church of England where the thing is properly done. Surpliced boy-choirs and intoned services, much as one may personally enjoy and profit by them, seem incongruous in many a modern Methodist church on either side of the Atlantic.

On previous visits we mourned over the neglect of the young people as such by English Methodism. We talked to leaders and urged that something more be done, and notified them that something would have to be done in the near future. They have awakened to the need, and the "Wesley Guild," spurred on by the Christian Endeavor at its side, is doing good work for young English Methodists. Had it not been American, we think they would have adopted the name "Epworth League." We are glad they have the thing, if not the same name.

We have been many times amused at the ignorance, and consequent prejudice, of even prominent English Methodists concerning

The Mother Church of Methodism.

America and its Methodism. The frequent visits of leading preachers to our country of late years is doing much to open the eyes of our mother, and to remove the prejudice from the minds of her English children concerning her great and ever growing greater daughter across the sea. The evangelistic spirit in the Mother Church has seemed to us to have increased on each succeeding visit during the past decade. How much Rev. S. F. Collier and his helpers in Manchester, and the late Rev. Hugh Price Hughes, his convert to these lines, and his fellow workers in London, have helped in this direction throughout the kingdom, we can not tell. We visited both of these centers of Christian activity, but can not now speak of them particularly.



Bound by
DESS & TALAN
New York, N. Y.

JAN 1965

92
Meredith, W: H: W515m

The real John Wesley
37708

37708

92
W515m

St. Marks Library
General Theological Seminary
175 Ninth Avenue
New York 11, N. Y.

Please stamp date in left column, write your name legibly in center column and leave right column blank. Deposit circulation card in slot marked 'Circulation cards'.

There is no date due, but books must be returned promptly upon request. Do not lend books charged to you to others. You are responsible for them.

